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THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM
REFLECTED IN THE LITERATURE OF ITALY
1775 - 1825.

Jean Campbell Myers,
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The Development of Nationalism as Reflected
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I. INTRODUCTION.

The beginning of national consciousness in Italy is not found till the latter part of the eighteenth century. But to exclude the earlier part of the era as an important influence merely because the period had no definite mention of national consciousness would be really ignoring the true beginning. For the political, the social, and the economic reforms, the struggle with the Papacy, and the general demand by the upperclasses for greater freedom were all essential parts of what would be the cry of the nineteenth century. Without these things as a background it would have been impossible to arouse the people. To be a success a revolution must have the masses behind it, and unless they are partially educated, it is difficult to appeal to them. The advances made between 1700-1775 really began this education of the people. The reformers were not interested in unity nor in nationalism; very little mention is found of the former and the latter did not exist. But when the time did come they were ready. They were to make Italy. Yet before 1870 many things were to occur and many battles were to be fought before the dream could become a reality. The Italian people had for so long been held in political

slavery that it did not seem possible for them to have been otherwise.

The peninsula at the opening of the century contained a group of petty states, (the Spanish dominion was practically at an end) of which the papacy was attempting to gain control. However, most of the efforts were abortive because the popes of the first quarter were weak, and Austria was strong, and corruption was everywhere. "The sovereigns envied the church's wealth, and disliked her independence and privileges" and they also wished to see the Austrian hold loosened. Then, too, the popular movements drove the rulers to attack the ecclesiastical position.

Next to France it was in Naples that anti-clericalism most flourished. Giannone, the historian, was a leader in this movement and his book, the Istoria Civile, though neither good nor original, became the handbook for the anti-church party. The natural result was that in 1734 when Don Carlos conquered Naples and found his more influential subjects ready to oppose the Papal claims to overlordship, he should assert his independence by ignoring investiture and curtailing ecclesiastical power. The Pope finally recognized his claims and the plans for a Neapolitan Concordat were begun.

Sicily, too, was going through the investiture struggle. For Victor Amadeus, ruler of Piedmont-Savoy, who had received Sicily at the Peace of Utrecht (1713),

1. H.M. Vernon, "Italy and the Papacy", The Cambridge Modern History, edited by A.W. Ward, G.W. Prothero, and S. Leathes, vol. VI, New York, 1909, p.587.

ascended the throne without papal authority. But his rule was short-lived for in 1718 Sicily was given back to the Spanish Bourbons and it came under the Neapolitan government. However, he received Sardinia in exchange for this loss. In Piedmont the struggle was continued, but he was supported by his subjects and many of the clergy. Sardinia which had been added, caused some difficulties, but due to the clever work of Ormea, sent by the king to Rome, a favorable Concordat was drawn up and the Sardinian question was dropped (1727).

Benedict XIV (1740) was the first of the popes to attempt to conciliate the various rulers but the result was to convince the anti-clerical party that the Papacy was powerless and to make the exasperated clergy prepare for reactionary measures. Naples was especially dissatisfied; the liberal party led by Genovesi felt that barely a beginning had been made in reform; the clergy felt that it had gone too far. Controversy was incessant and Benedict could not procure ecclesiastical peace.

Venice, which had had more ecclesiastical liberty, remained quiet until under Benedict's rule she published a decree infringing on Papal rights. Tuscany, which had been priest-ridden dared only to make mild reforms, but not to quarrel outright.

Throughout the century, the quarrel over the Jesuits went on, but its height occurred in the middle. First Spain

abolished the order and deported all Jesuits to Italy. Naples, under the minister Tanucci, immediately followed Spain. The Pope, Clement XIII (1758), was much embarrassed by their presence until finally Genoa gave them a refuge in Corsica. But this was short-lived for when France took over the island, they were once more expelled. The difficulties with Parma caused the Bourbons, who had been the ringleaders in the movement, to demand the entire dissolution of the order in 1769.

Clement XIII died that same year and Clement XIV, who loved peace and justice, bent every effort to settling the difficulties. Nevertheless, the Jesuit contest lasted for four more years. Clement deliberately delayed his decision and was more than justified. For the Jesuit duplicity soon alienated all their friends and in 1773 the Bull for suppression was published. Their end proved a heavy blow for Papal prestige because many of their interests coincided. The result was that the following years contained many church reforms, most of which were without the Papal consent.

Aside from all the difficulties which the peninsula as a whole was having with the Popes, each state had internal dissension and Austria was continuing her attempt to gain control over entire Italy.

Naples, under Charles III (1734-1759), was more or less peaceful. He managed to satisfy the most urgent demands of the reformers to keep Austria out, and finally in 1755, found Tanucci, who was to become all powerful during the

Regency of Ferdinand, his successor. The government has excellent intentions but not sufficient strength of purpose to effect the striking improvements planned.² Its actions were continually hindered by the nobility and clergy. Little progress could be made towards the most necessary reform, abolition of classes. The nobles were dissipated and extravagant and, as the principal estate in Parliament, they voted the taxes and thus could force the government to abandon any reform unpopular with them.

However, their authority was somewhat diminished by attracting them to court and their place was taken by members of the official class who were influential, conservative, and usually opposed reform. There was a very small commercial middle class. The unfortunate peasantry bore the brunt of the taxation, and misery drove many to brigandage. The attempts of Tanucci to improve the methods of taxing were not successful. In spite of this, the government really had tried to improve the economic conditions, but due to the narrow mindedness of the nobility nearly all their efforts failed. Only in the judicial system was much improvement made. "Tanucci tried to check bribery, moderate the penal laws, impose limits on feudal tyranny, hasten procedure, and punish the corrupt."³ The codification of the

2. Vernon, op. cit., p.598.

3. Vernon, op. cit., p.599.

law was a failure because it was intrusted to an incompetent person. This same stupidity appeared in every department of the government; for example, the buildings begun by the state were never completed. Yet this much can be said, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was better off than it had been for many previous centuries. The king was popular and the people fairly contented.

The Papal States were ruled in much the same way as they always had been, the priests completely in control. There had been no growth of the middle class as in other states. All the officials were venal and the taxes were preposterously high. There was no industry and commerce and agricultural methods had not improved since the middle ages. No attempts were made to bring about any vital changes in the time of Benedict XIV, who saw that economic reforms were necessary. He proved more or less successful in his attempts. The next fifteen years, under Clement XIII and XIV, were devoted to the Jesuit quarrel. The rule of Pius VI (1775) was peaceable, and the state of affairs calmed down as much as was possible with all the clamoring in Europe for ecclesiastical changes. He tried to drain the swamps and make other agricultural improvements, but all he accomplished was to waste an enormous amount of money. Throughout the century, the Papacy was really fighting to maintain its temporal power in Italy and its spiritual hold over Europe. But each change that was made weakened its grip and by 1815

it was nearly gone, only the outward signs remained.

Tuscany had needed reforming as much if not more than any state of Italy. It was priest-ridden, the commercial prosperity was dead, and the vigorous merchant class supplanted by flaccid courtiers. But reforms also had more apparent success there for the people were pliant and agreed to their ruler's orders. The work was begun under Francis of Lorraine, who checked the feudal abuses, practiced administrative economy, lowered internal customs, and encouraged agriculture. Above all, he deserves credit for his firm stand concerning clerical abuses. He was followed by Peter Leopold, who was interested in the new philosophy and in the current ideas of reform. His government was frankly absolute yet his one interest was reform. He had abstract theories of educating the people by pamphlets and the like. He made improvements in the local administration and in the judicial system by simplifying procedure, checking corruption, and especially in the latter by following Beccaria's advice in penal reform. Nevertheless, he could not end feudalism, and the agrarian situation was terrible, famine occurring regularly. Most unpopular of all were his ecclesiastical changes, in which he did not attempt to separate church and state but to reform the former. He did, however, improve the church by his innovations concerning the nunneries, the partial suppression of Confraternities, secular education, and placing patronage in the hands of the

Bishops and the Grand Duke. Yet Leopold could not make reform popular due to the propaganda of the monks and the clergy among the masses. Though he might have expected failure, it disappointed him terribly. His reign is interesting as an example of a ruler who wished to carry out the eighteenth century ideals.

Venice maintained a formal neutrality in western politics, even after the Peace of Utrecht when she was surrounded by Austrian territory. The only reason she kept her freedom was because the Great Powers would not allow each other to violate it. Her navy was decaying, her high protective tariffs had driven away her trade, her internal industries were stagnant, and her agriculture was in poor condition. Yet much private wealth remained and she was noted throughout Europe for her gaiety and luxury. The nobility was impoverished and greatly diminished. They were discontent with the strict rule and one group of them wished to revive the republic by means of the new liberal ideas. A few mild reforms were brought about in the latter part of the century, but no substantial change was made. The whole era represented the continued political and moral decadence of Venice. It was very gradual and she really existed on her past reputation, but was in such a condition that at the slightest blow the whole structure would crumble.⁴

4. Vernon, op. cit., p.607.

Lombardy and the surrounding territory was under Austrian rule and had been since the beginning of the century. Up to the death of Charles VI (1745), little had been done to improve the country. However, under Maria Theresa "the government was characterized by improved agriculture, regular administration, order, reformed taxation, and increased education. The nobles and clergy although rich were kept in hand by the civil government."⁵ The reforms were continued by Joseph II and he was especially interested in the modification of the penal code. He, also, decreased the power of the clergy, diminished the number of holidays, restrained the power of nobility, and made innumerable decrees and orders renovating and transforming all the administration. He was a typical enlightened despot and on the whole his rule was beneficial and certainly an improvement over the Spanish domination. The changes were so great and Lombardy so prosperous that the reigns of these monarchs are considered among the most successful in the history of Lombardy.

Sardinia or Piedmont-Savoy was by this time the one state that was mutually feared by all other Italian states. For it seemed to be animated by insatiable ambition. Under Victor Amadeus II, it had materially improved and some political and social reforms had been made. Under Charles Emmanuel III (1730), these were carried on but also he was intent upon getting a seaport for Piedmont. The result was a long drawn out war with Genoa which ended with his success

5. J.A. Symonds, and L. Villari, "Italian History," in The Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. XII, New York, 1929, p. 799.

in 1746. He had joined the last piece of Piedmont to the ancient dominion of his house. Sardinia, which had been added earlier, received much of his attention. He found there deplorable conditions due to four centuries of Spanish misrule. It was in great part uncultivated and was held almost entirely by feudatories. He made many radical reforms which were quite necessary. On the whole the conditions in his country were not bad and the nobility, although powerful, were subject to complete obedience to the king. But his successor, Victor Amadeus III (1773-1796), although good and loyal, was without strength or understanding of his time. He permitted the priests once more to overrun the state, to control the schools, to dispense the public charity, to have their own prisons and tribunals, and they alone had the right to judge between clergy and laymen in matters of faith, heresy, matrimonial difficulties, etc. The bourgeoisie objected to the light taxes of the clergy and the nobility, and felt very deeply the class distinction, and in order to correct this, they became very interested in the philosophical and economic writings of the day. The only improvements that were made were connected with the army, for the king had a desire to be like Frederick II.

The family of Farnese, to whom the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza had belonged, died out in 1731 and after that it passed into the hands of the Bourbons. Don Filippo, under the guidance of his minister Tillot, introduced many

reforms; the privileges of the nobility were limited, the immunity of the clergy was abolished, and arts and letters were patronized. However when the young duke came into power in 1771, he not only did not continue the reforms, but abrogated those already accomplished.

The Duchies of Modena and Reggio under the d'Estes were just moving along with the times. They did not achieve much and were so small as to be quite negligible. In 1771 on the extinction of the family, they passed into the hands of Austria.

Genoa was the last of the republics to fall. It maintained its commerce and in the early part of the century made a valiant stand against Charles Emmanuel III but lost because their allies deserted. Corsica, which belonged to them, was ceded to France in 1768 because they were unable to control it. It was in this struggle against Corsica that all their weakness can be seen. All the power was in the hands of the nobility, who based their wealth on trade. They were backward but not as much so as most of the peninsula.

It may be seen from this political summary that Italy as a whole did not exist nor apparently was there any hope of its ever existing. However, this was not the first time that the cry for reform had been sounded. As early as the thirteenth century, Dante had seen that reform was necessary but he had formulated his theory on a somewhat different basis. He was a prophet of a united Italy, of an Italy

which was to be the center of an immense empire. His was the conception of a general superstate, governing the kingdoms of the earth in justice and peace.⁷ In De Monarchia he proved that universal monarchy is a portion of the Providential scheme, that the Romans possessed by divine appointment jurisdiction over the entire earth. The inheritance of this prerogative by the Emperor of Germany was taken for granted. Dante looked at the Church together with the State, but he desired, to quote Cavour, "a free church in a free state" because he was convinced that the present trouble was due to the attempt of the Papacy to combine the shepherd's crook with the sword. Yet the State could not effectively exercise its political rights without the spiritual support which comes from an organic religious life; but for either one to attempt to combine both functions was fatal and limited their ability to do good. Dante's State, which he called imperium, was based on unum velle, unum nolle and it depended on justice which was the universal will.

In his fifth epistle addressed to the nobles of Italy, he prophesied a leader and the end of their calamity. He called to them to put off their barbarisms and live as they were supposed to do. And again he says, "Hence we have long wept by the streams of Confusion, and without ceasing have implored the protection of the righteous king, that

6. Dante, la Divina Commedia, "Purgatorio", VI, 1105,

"Che il giardin dell'imperio sia deserto".

7. C.H. Grandgent, Discourses on Dante, Cambridge, 1924, p.23.

he should scatter the following of the cruel tyrant and reestablish us in our just rights. And when thou, (Henry of Luxembour^g) successor of Caesar and Augustus, leaping over the ridges of the Apennines, didst bring back the venerated Tarpeian standards, forthwith our long sighing desisted and the floods of our tears were dried. And, even, as the rising of the longed-for Titan, the new hope of a better age flashed upon Latium."

But this was to end in bitter disappointment for Henry was killed and Italy left once more leaderless. Dante might well say, "Lo quale calvallo come vada senza lo cavalcatore per lo campo assai è manifesto, e specialmente ne la misera Italia, che senza mezzo alcuno a la sua⁹ governance è rimasa". But despite this view, Dante ended on a note of hope that some day Italy would be united and free. He saw that peace could not be without a strong State. Yet unless it coincided with justice and with liberty, the peace would be a vain hope and the necessary war, which should be fought without truce and without hesitation, would be useless especially if the Italian did not remain firm in the faith that God willed it. He dreamed a great dream and the world has yet to see it come wholly true.

8. Dante, "Epistle VII", in A Translation of the Latin Works of Dante Alighieri, London, 1904, p. 324.

9. "And how that horse courses over the plain without the rider is manifest enough, and especially in the wretched Italy which, without any mediator at all has been abandoned to her own direction".

Dante, Le Opere di Dante, Il Convivio, Florence, 1921, p. 265.

Petrarch, in the next century, was also imbued with a strong desire for an Italian state. His ideas were not as far reaching as Dante's nor were they so idealistic. He lamented the fact that they did not seem to feel their ills, "Will she sleep forever and will no one arouse her." ¹⁰ The motif of his song was national pride and hatred of the barbarians. He said in one of his canzone:

"Virtù contra furore
Prendrà l'arme, e fia combatter corto:
Che l'antico valore
Negl'italici cor non è ancor morto." ¹¹

He, too, called on the nobles to lead the people to victory but his call went unheeded. Cola da Rienzi's success as Roman tribune again aroused his hopes. He wrote to him, urging him to continue his great and noble work and called him the new Camillus, Brutus, and Romulus. For Rienzi's attempt at unification was the closest that Italy came to the realization of Dante's dreams, and Petrarch said of him:

"Spirto gentil che quelle membra reggi
Dentro alle qua'pere grinado alberga
Un signor valoroso accorto e saggio;
.....
O grand Scipione, O fidel Bruto
Quanto i'aggrada, s'egli è ancor venuto
Rumor laggiù del ben locato ufizio." ¹²

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10. W.R. Thayer, The Dawn of Italian Independence, Boston, 1893, vol. 1, p.92.
11. "Brief will be the strife
When valour arms against barbaric rage
For the bold spirit of a bygone age
Still warms Italian hearts with life".
Petrarch, "Canzone VI", The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, collected by St. John Lucas, Oxford, 1925, p.179.
12. "Gentle spirit who holds that frame in which wanders a
valorous, cautious, and wise lord.....
O great Scipio, O faithful Brutus, if the news of this
well done deed comes to your ear, how you will be pleased".
Ibid., pp.133-134.

But Petrarch was doomed to disappointment, for Italy was at the height of her artistic and literary development and since the whole of Europe bowed down to her for that she cared not for her political weakness.

Machiavelli was the next to see that a unified country was essential. He was convinced that the ruin of Italy was the direct result of her division and of the foreign invasions caused by the Papal greed. So he originated a new theory of statesmanship in which the state was substituted for the church as the center of man's life. Duty to the State was the only motto. He completely ignored the questions of happiness and of natural rights. They might come as a by-product but whether they did or no was unessential as long as man devoted himself wholeheartedly to furthering the desires of the State. For the "patria" absorbed religion, morality and individuality. He definitely said that this State was to include the whole of the peninsula. And until this unification was achieved Italy could never be prosperous or great. His leanings were anti-papal, anti-imperial, and anti-feudal. Above all he believed that it was possible to do it at that moment for he says, "We see how she prays God to send someone to rescue her from these barbarous cruelties and oppressions. We see, too, how ready and eager she is to follow any standard were there only someone to raise it. But at present we see no one except in your illustrious house who could assume the part of a deliverer."¹² He fully

15. N. Machiavelli, Il Principe e altri scritti minori, Milan, 1924, pp. 236-237.

realized that the conditions were terrific and that if the country as a whole, was to prosper a new leader must appear. However, his plea went unheeded despite his flattery, "Nothing confers such honor on a new ruler, as do the new laws and institutions he devises. And in Italy material is not wanting for improvement in every form."¹⁴ And despite his scorn, "This barbarian tyranny stinks in all nostrils."¹⁵ The princes continued to follow their greedy and selfish desires. His idea proved to be just as Utopian as Dante's because "the people in Italy were still in darkness, unilluminated by the smallest ray of education so that "country," "liberty," "Italy," "good weapons," "good discipline" were only words to them."¹⁶ He was an idealist yet his real glory lies in the fact that his illusions of the present have become realities of the future.

A slightly younger contemporary, Guicciardini, followed much the same path as he (Machiavelli) had except that he was a stern realist. He dreamed only to say that theorizing was foolish and all was based on self-love. He hated priests. He hated foreigners. He wished liberty for Italy (not in the modern sense of the word) but he only wished and did nothing. He wrote: "There are three things that I desire to see before I die. But I doubt greatly, even should I live to a great age, that I shall ever see one of them. I desire to see a well-ordered republic in

14. Ibid., p. 237.

15. Ibid., p. 241.

16. F. deSanctis, The History of Italian Literature, translated by J. Redfern, New York, 1931, II, 570.

our city, and Italy freed from all the barbarians, and the world delivered from the tyranny of those rascally priests."¹⁷ He saw the conflict between the Middle Ages and the resuscitated antiquity. He saw what should be but he was too disillusioned to believe it possible. Machiavelli had a wider viewpoint for he saw humanity, social classes, nations, liberty; whereas Guicciardini saw only the passions, self-interests, and opinions which made the individuals.

These men are really the forerunners of the reform and the unification movements. They, of course, did not have the same type of ideas which appeared in the eighteenth century. None of them were democratic in the current use of the word. Yet they are more important for merely having dreamed than for any actual contribution which they may have made towards theory. They gave to the Italians, as a people, something to which to refer. Dante especially fulfilled this function and in one sense of the word his writings became their Bible. They felt that he was truly a prophet and should be honored as such.

Dante, aside from his political theories, is very important in the development of linguistic unity. Up to 1250, all writing had generally been done in Latin. For, during the Middle Ages only Latin was taught in the schools.

17. deSanctis, op. cit., II, 588.

Also, all who wrote in local dialects tended to latinize and thus approximate it to the Tuscan vernacular, which of all Italian vernaculars was closest to the Latin. The country lacked political unity and thus had no political center which might become linguistically pre-eminent. During the thirteenth century there were prose and poetry written in practically every dialect in Italy. He (Dante), by using the vernacular as a literary language, made the first step towards establishing an Italian language. In De Vulgari Eloquentia, he sought to find a language fitted to belong to the whole of Italy. He failed to find it in any of the local dialects, but he argued there must be some common measure or standard of comparison for the dialects and "he declared that language should be illustrious, cardinal, courtly, and curial, which belongs to all the towns in Italy but does not belong to any one of them."¹⁸ He went on to say that "the illustrious Italian vernacular is¹⁹ equally fit for use in prose and in verse." He, thus, suggested an artificial selection of the best elements from each dialect. In practice, however, he departed from his own theory, for his language is nothing but Florentine. His influence was as great as his success. For there was a definite need for a general language and Tuscan seemed to fulfill this need. Even if the people spoke in their own dialects they understood the other and it gave them a common

18. Dante, De Vulgari Eloquentia, in A Translation of the Latin Works of Dante Alighieri, London, 1904, p. 56.

19. Ibid., p. 65.

bond and Dante's dialect soon became classical Italian.

Petrarch, despite his great interest in humanism and all the return to the past which was connected with it, did much to further the language used by Dante. For he wrote his sonnets and canzoni in the vernacular, and after all they are his masterpieces and reached a great number of people. Much the same thing may be said for Boccaccio. He wrote the Decameron in Italian and continued the use of it instead of Latin. Thus collectively their example contributed to the inevitable triumph of Florentine.

One of the earliest attempts definitely to compose an Italian dictionary is to be seen in the Academy of Crusca, which was founded in 1582 by Salviati for the express purpose of studying the idiom of the vulgar language and to prove that the Tuscan dialect was the best for the language of letters. It compiled its first Vocabolario in 1612 and this was republished at irregular intervals. They wished it to contain all the Tuscan words in use in the Trecento. However, this caused many disputes because many of them had become archaic and the compilers would allow very few modern words and scarcely any colloquialisms to be introduced. Another great fault was that they had sacrificed originality to criticism. Finally in the eighteenth century, rebellion resulted and the Academy was accused, by both the philosophers and the critics, of having caused sterility in the Italian language. But this was not the only academy. Many more sprang up all over Italy. Most of them had strange and

bizarre names, were over-ceremonious, and devoted their attention to composing and reciting dull poetry and insipid prose. There were a few who devoted themselves to more noble and serious work, such as the Academy of Lincei and the Academy of Cimento.

The nuova scienza, which was the first reconstruction of consciousness, the new world as opposed to asceticism, the world discovered and illustrated by science, was in the air in the seventeenth century. Natural philosophy was developing and the new spirit was felt not only in philosophy but in every branch of learning. Yet as this great movement of things and ideas was spreading over Europe, Italy was creating the Academies of the Arcadia. DeSanctis says: "This was the real production of Italy's individual and moral existence."²⁰ This movement did not mean that Italy had not awakened to a sense of her decadence but rather that she was seeking to correct it by the wrong method. The Arcadia was limited to abstractions and respectful to institutions but they were useful inasmuch as they were widespread and had valuable unifying effects in both language and ideas. It was a surface movement originating in Rome in 1690, "but it spread, it inured the minds of Italy to the thought of novelty, it crushed the Aristotelians, and it sank into the minds of the new generation, linking them with Europe and preparing the way for the coming change in national spirit."²¹

20. deSanctis, op. cit., II, 786

21. Ibid., II, 790.

All important men of the century were members of one academy or another. For it was there that they were entirely free to discuss any question which they wished. It was there that the liberal ideas took a deep root and from the writing which these men did the theories of government and literature were spread through the nobility and upper bourgeoisie. These same ideas later took form in the desire for unification.

Giannone was one of the earlier of these forerunners and played an important part in the political difficulties which arose from the Papacy's attempt to claim the overlordship of Naples. The appeal of his Storia civile del regno di Napoli was so wide chiefly because of this judicial question, which was a burning one in all Catholic states. Giannone used ~~democracy~~ to aid in proving his point but he did not see that this same proof might be used against the princes whom he considered an essential part of government. Another very interesting fact is that he was the only person who foresaw the future greatness of the House of Savoy and its services towards Italy as a nation.

Genovesi (1712-1789), following this same tendency, attempted to convince the people that unity was a necessity if happiness were to be had. He was the first of this century to urge this specific point. But his belief in the educative function of the state was far more important at the moment because all the liberal ideas in the world would

do no good unless the masses were capable of understanding them. Also he denounced the relics of medieval institutions such as entails and tenures in mortmain.

Still another Neapolitan, Galiani (1728-1787), took an active interest in the reform movement, but his real value lay not so much in what he said but in how he said it. For he popularized philosophy by putting it in such a form that the reading public preferred it to the stilted work of the majority of the academies. He was especially engaged in spreading the ideas developed by the Encyclopedists, the Physiocrats, and Voltaire.

Filangieri, a contemporary, was a much more practical person. His Scienza della legislazione combatted the excessive interference of governments. He believed that a philosopher should not be the inventor of system but the apostle of truth. With this attitude, he naturally contributed much to the overthrow of the old system, the remnants of the Middle Ages,--- in fact, the old social and political order. And it was just this attitude which made the nineteenth century possible. For as the truth gradually seeped down among the people so dissatisfaction with conditions increased and they became ready to build a nation.

Beccaria, Baretti, and the brothers Verri were all members of the Academy of the Trasformati. "They called themselves the 'Transformed' and certainly human study in its every branch, whether philosophy, politics, or morals, was all of it transformed, more or less consciously

and clearly, in passing through their minds." ²² The Verri brothers published Il Caffè in which they attempted by jest and satire to reform the manners and the customs of their day. It rebelled against the traditional ideas, was nourished on French science, and was inflamed with ideal humanitarianism. ²³ It really resembled the encyclopedias of the day. Besides the political side, it was vitally interested in literary criticism, opposing the Arcadia, the Cruscan grammar, and the rhetoric. It was against imitation and wished to evolve a prose style suitable to the subject matter, clear and distinct.

Pietro Verri (1728-1796) also wrote a very important treatise, Meditazione sull'economia politica, in which he showed how a new financial system might be created. His purpose was a definite desire to help those beneath him and above all he foresaw with remarkable divination the not far distant war of nations and he glimpsed the future fate of Italy. Beccaria (1738-1794), urged on by the Verris, published his famous and far reaching work, Dei delitti e delle pene (1761), where with stringent logic and with warm eloquence he proposed the abolition of torture and of extreme punishment. He was fighting the old legislation, in fact the whole social order was in question. The book contributed to the overthrow of medieval notions of justice and infused a human spirit into the law, not merely by urging

22. deSanctis, *op. cit.*, II, 880.

23. V. Rossi, Storia della letteratura Italiana, Milan, 1928, III, 148.

the abolition of torture, but by proposing the reformation of the criminal as the real object of punishment. In this he was much ahead of his age as well as in his desire for the separation of judicial and legislative powers. But his famous phrase, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" might be acknowledged as the motto of the next Italian generation. He worked for his own age but he saw the future clearly and did much to make it possible. However political and social reform were not Beccaria's only interests. He aided in the publishing of Il Caffè, and he wrote an important volume called Trattato dello stile, in which he showed that the author's aim was no longer style but rather what he wished to do was to produce an effect on the reader. "The secrets of style were to be found in psychology, in the study of the feelings and impressions." He was really seeking to find the things which would make life bearable for the masses. His dissertation was merely a means to show the people how to write so as to be understood. He clearly saw the impossibility of the road which the statesmen were following, and that without reform civilization could not advance.

Baretti (1719-1789) was another important member of the Trasformati. His journal, the Frusta letteraria, was supposedly an imitation of the Spectator. He wished to arouse literature from its shameful torpor and he savagely attacked bad writing. He desired especially to reform prose



and to do away with the artificialities which had become all important. With Baretti modern Italian prose was truly initiated. For he does not follow a logical and definite system of aesthetics, but rather, since he was very much of the eighteenth century, he advised the use of common sense and reason. Aside from his literary criticisms, he was known for his satires and his political pamphlets. He was in complete agreement with the general trend towards democracy and through his writing aided in the spread of progress.

Caesarotti, in Filosofia delle lingue, was also fighting for emancipation-----" to get free from rules and authority, from the tyranny of grammar and rhetoric, the Arcadian and the academic; and here, as in everything else, they admitted no other judge but logic and nature." ²⁴ He sustained the thesis that language existed for the thought it contained and that the best word was the one which would best render the thought whether it be Tuscan, classical, or colloquial. He stressed reason and good taste as the final guides.

The whole century was based on reason. Italy as the other countries of Europe was filled with the ideas of the Enlightenment. The academies, philosophers, critics, poets were all imbued with the idea of the potentialities of the masses, with education and general political reform as the methods of awakening them. They gave their message to the world and waited expectantly for results. But their interest was narrow, they had no larger vision, and there

24. deSanctis, op. cit., II, 855.

were few who had the dream of a united Italy. Yet it can not be said that they lived in vain. For their ideas spread into the upper bourgeoisie and then gradually began to penetrate still deeper. People, aside from merely being conscious that something was wrong, began to feel that something could and should be done. Thus this might be considered the educative period. But even with the many reforms the greater part of the evils were untouched. "Italy was still the Paradise of priests and nobles,"²⁵ and the masses existed only as means to their ends. Nevertheless in some of the northern cities industrialization was developing under the care of the bourgeoisie and the new ideas were being weighed by them for their true value. All Italy free from foreign domination was the goal. The reaction had set in and no man was able to prophesy where it would lead.

25. P. Orsi, L'Italia moderna (1750-1923), Milan, 1923, p. 29.

II.

NATIONALISM IN EARLY ITALIAN ROMANTICISTS

It is true that no man was able to prophesy the course of the next fifty years. Yet the path they did take can easily be traced in the literature of the period. For all writers were much influenced by the influx of new ideas and especially those of a political nature. Parini and Alfieri represent this new trend of thought in its infancy, Monte and Foscolo in youth, and Manzoni and Leopardi in its maturity.

The movement, or maybe it should be called revolt, was not at its height until the end of the century. There were, however, several whose best works were written before this time. Among these forerunners were Giuseppe Parini (1729-1799) and Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803). Each in his own fashion combined the elements of classicism and romanticism. Parini was more like his own century, and Alfieri like the one to follow, and each played his part in arousing the peninsula from its lethargy, Parini by attacking the social system and thus attempting to rebuild the civil conscience, Alfieri by attacking the political system²⁶ and attempting to revive the love of liberty. In this way they stood in opposition to the complacency of most Italians of their age.

26. A.D'Ancona and O. Bacci, Manuale della Letteratura Italiana, Florence, 1925, vol.4, p.437.

Giuseppe Parini certainly played his part well, for his was no superficial knowledge of society. Since he was an ²⁷ Abate he had entrance into all places where the nobility gathered, and coupled with this was the fact that he was a keen observer. He saw life clearly and he saw it whole, but he expressed it through the most cutting irony in Il Giorno (1763), which is without a doubt his masterpiece. He tells of a society which was in appearance aristocratic, but in reality corrupt, effeminate and vulgar; he was himself, in habits of thought and feeling, in pure and noble ideals of life, and actual personality, in open and strident conflict with this society. His own mode of thinking in contrast with that with which he is surrounded at times gives a smug tone to his satire, but he is to be forgiven, for it was indeed a decadent age and his ideas were in great contrast.

His works contained within their various parts a noble conception of human dignity, a great current of humanitarian ideas, and last but not least, strong democratic force. These three things, better than any others, sum up his beliefs, for he was not imbued, as Alfieri, with a strong sense of patriotism, rather he still was concerned primarily with his own problems, and approved of the Austrian regime, which had done away with the Spanish oppression. Rossi says: "Poeta civile ed umano, non andava oltre all'età sua col pensiero d'una rigenerazione politica della patria. Tutta ma

27. Abate (abbot) - a monk who has taken the Minor Orders; during this period it was customary to have one in every salon. Their employment was generally as secretary to some nobleman.

l'entousiasmo di libertà che spirava d'oltralpe, colse anche lui e gli fe' concepire la segreta speranza di giorni migliori per l'Europa e specialmente per l'Italia".²⁸ Yet these facts do not lessen his value, but rather show his borderline position between the eighteenth century reformers and the nineteenth century patriots.

He realized the value of democracy, and in Il Giorno he says:

"Forse vero non è; ma un giorno, è fama
Che fur gli uomini eguali; e ignoti nomi
Fur Plebe e Nobilitade. Al cibo, al bere,
All'accoppiarsi d'ambo i sessi, al sonno,
Un istinto medesimo, un'egual forza
Sospingeva gli umani;
..... A un rivo stesso,
A un medesimo frutto, a una stess'ombra,
Convenivano insieme i primi padri
Del tuo sangue, o Signore, e i primi padri
De la plebe spregiata".²⁹

He then continues with an intensely ironical explanation of the origin of social disparity, and it is through the symbolical synthesis of these humanitarian ideas that Parini is never tired of inculcating, affirming the equality of

28. "The poet, civil and human, did not go beyond the age with his thought of a political regeneration of the fatherland. All but the enthusiasm for liberty which he breathed from beyond the Alps, gave him the secret hope of better days for Europe, and especially for Italy."
V. Rossi, Storia della Letteratura Italiana, Milan, 1928, vol. III, p. 177.

29. "It may not be true, but it is known that the masses and the nobility were unknown words. The human beings were inspired to eat, to drink, to marry, to sleep by the same instinct, the same force; Your fathers, oh my Lord, and the fathers of the scorned masses met together on the same shore, under the same shade and ate the same fruit."
G. Parini, Poesie e Prose, Il Giorno, I Classici Edizione Florentia, Florence, 1926, pp. 63-64.

men before nature, exalting the useful work of the peasants and of the artisans over the useless pleasure hunting of the nobility, execrating the worthless cruelty of these last towards the unfortunates, infamous in comparison with their affected pity for the beast.

There are other poems where he follows this general theme as, for example, the description of the peasants arising in "Il Mattino":

"Sorge il mattino in compagnia dell'Alba
Denanzi al Sol, di poi grande appare
Su l'estremo orizzonte, a render lieti
Gli animali e le piante e i campi e l'onde.
Allora il buon villan sorge del caro
Letto, cui la fedel sposa e i minori
Suoi figlioletti intietidir la notte;
Poi, sul collo recando i sacri arnesi
Che prima ritrovâr Cerere e Pale
Va, col bue lento innanzi al campo, e scuote
Lungo il picciol sentier di'curvi rami
Il rugiadoso umor che, quasi gemma,
I nascenti del Sol raggi rifrange." 30

or his still more famous ode, La Vita Rustica (Su la libertà campestre, 1757) in which he shows the real beauty of country life, but with this side there is another, a real appreciation of human dignity and a complete realization that the individual's understanding of his own place must come before

30. "Morning dawns before the sun which then appears large on the extreme horizon, comes to make happy the animals, the plants, the fields, and the waves. Then the good peasant arises from his bed which was warmed by his faithful wife and his children during the night, then throwing over his back the sacred implements which were first found by Ceres and Pallas, goes through the fields and along the narrow path and shakes from the bending branches dew, which almost like a gem reflects the newly born rays of the sun."
Ibid., Il Giorno, pp.23-24

any true social regeneration could be accomplished. So with this in his mind, Parini not only ridiculed the aristocracy for their lack of moral and intellectual background, but he pointed out the lower classes as being nearer his idea of what men should be. This ideal, he felt, was ignored by nearly all, and La Caduta (1785), for this reason, becomes a cry of anguish. It is extremely bitter, and it contains somewhat the same general elements of satire as Il Giorno, except that it is still more inflexible in its right and more rebellious against contemporary standards and opinions. He felt that one did not receive just recognition unless one were willing to fawn and flatter. So he ends the poem thus:

"E se i duri mortali
A lui voltano il tergo,
Ei se fa, contro ai mali,
Della costanza sua scudo ed usbergo.
Nè si abbassa per duoli,
Nè s'alza per orgoglio.
E ciò dicendo, solo
Lascio il mio appoggio;.....
Così, grato ai soccorsi,
Ho il consiglio a dispetto;
E privo di rimorsi,
Col dubitante piè torno al mio tetto."³¹

He did not stop here, either in criticism or in his appreciation of what was taking place. He felt as deeply as Beccaria

31. "And if the hard mortals turn their backs on him he makes a shield and protection against harm from his constancy. He does not bow his head with sorrow nor raise it with pride and saying this, I leave my support alone;..... Thus, while I am grateful for help I despise council and without remorse I hesitatingly turn my steps towards my humble home."

Ibid., La Caduta, p. 184.

did concerning the penal code, and he echoes the latter's doctrine in Il Bisogno (1765), exhorting the judges to a feeling of pity for the unfortunate ones, forced to confess a crime by that "persuasore orribile di mali." ³² He goes on to say that it does not really get the truth nor has the law the power to ignore all human rights. He concludes with this hope, or really more, a surety that reform will prove more efficacious than the former method:

"E il carcere temuto
Lor lieto apalancasti;
E, dando oro ed aiuto,
Generoso insegnasti
Come senza le pene
Il fallo si previene." ³³

He not only honored the man who improved the penal code, but he also gave a due place to the magistrate, who fulfilled his duty; in La Magistratura (Per Camillo Gritti Podesto di Vicenza, 1788).

"E tal suo zelo sparse,
Che grande ai grandi, al cittadino pari,
Uom comune a i volgari,
Rettor, giudice, padre, a tutti apparse;
Destando in tutti, estreme
Cose, amicizia e riverenza insieme." ³⁴

32. "Horrible persuador of crimes".

Ibid., Il Bisogno, p.161

33. "And you happily threw open the feared jail for them and giving money and aid you generously taught them how one can prevent an error without sorrow."

Ibid., Il Bisogna, p.163

34. "And thus he shared his zeal so that he appeared great to the great, and equal to the citizen, a common man to the masses and to all he seemed a director, a judge, a father, inspiring all with the great things, friendship and reverence at the same time."

Ibid., La Magistratura, p.200.

Aside from any actual changes which should be made, he was fighting for a spiritual regeneration. The age was shallow, the people never desired to go below the surface. The proper form was all that really mattered, and with such an attitude, little or no good was possible. He sought for the answer to this difficulty, and he attempted, by expressing his own opinion on the then present conditions, to arouse discontent and desire for change. He touches again on the fawning and deceit in L'Impostura (1761), where he treated 35
 imposture as a god followed by the highest to the lowest, only at the end to turn suddenly and invite Truth to remain with him always.

"Tu per sempre a lui mi togli;
 E me nudo nuda accogli." 36

Truth that can triumph over the "mostro orrendo" 37 and to which the arts are wickedly exposed gives the title to the ode.

With L'Educazione (1764), the poet returns to the nobility, instructing them in courage, in sane work, in sincerity, and in humanity. The whole is marked by a feeling of superiority which is annoying. Nevertheless, his points were well taken, and certainly will never lose their value. The usual irony is present, but is not as marked. One of

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35. "Tu il discorso volgi amico
 Al monarca ed al mendica."
 "You speak with equal friendship to the king and to the beggar."
Ibid., L'Impostura, p. 145.
36. "You always take me away from him, and, naked, welcome me in my nakedness."
Ibid., L'Impostura, p. 148.
37. "horrible monster"
Ibid., L'Impostura, p. 93.

the best stanzas is:

"Giustizia entro al tuo seno
Sieda e sul labbro il vero:
E le tue mani sieno
Qual albero forestiero
Onde soavi unguenti
Stillin sopra le genti."³⁸

His poetry does not deal only with general and abstract topics. For a greater part, Il Giorno consists of minute pictures of social customs, customs, which as long as they lasted, prevented Italy's progress; customs which resulted in a nation of fops and psuedo-intellectuals, customs which occupied the men who should have been interested in national affairs. It is a satire of which every word is loaded with venom, yet with all, it is amusing, and for that reason had real value because it was read everywhere. He carried his pretense of pupil and instructor throughout the entire poem, and in conclusion said:

".....Umili cose
E di picciol valore al cieco vulgo."³⁹

Parini misses nothing, from gently poking fun at the false learning,

(".....: e il calcolo, e la massa,
E l'inversa ragion, sonino ancora
Su la bocca amorosa. Or più non odia
Delle scole il sermone Amor maestro;
La l'Accademia e i Portici passeggia

38. "Justice abide in your heart and truth on your lips and may your hands be an exotic tree bestowing unguent unto the people."

Ibid., L'Educazione, p. 152.

39. "..... Humble things and of little value to the blind masses"

Ibid., Il Giorno, p. 134.

De' filosofi al fianco, e con la molle
Mano accarezza le cadenti barbe.") 40

to the complete lack of any moral value.

(".....Al cibo, al bere,
All'accoppiarsi d'ambo i sessi, al sonno,
Un istinto medesimo, un'egual forza
Sospingeva gli umani;") 41

For his intention was to induce the nobility to be
ashamed of their laziness and of their haughtiness, to inspire
them to a more sane concept of life, to teach them their duty.

"Volsi diceva egli stesso,
L'itale Muse a render saggi e buoni
I cittadini miei". 42

And since he felt that changes could be brought
about through writing, he was deeply sympathetic with Alfieri,
although so far as actual ideas went, they had little in com-
mon. Parini realized that he had revived the tragedy, but
more than that, he was attempting to revive Italy, and he
expresses Alfieri's purpose as this:

"E le poste a'tuoi colpi anime segno
Pien d'inusato ardir scuoti ed avvampi". 43

But aside from his criticism of social customs, he found
other faults which should be changed. He realized full
well that Italy was a subject nation, but he also saw that
this subjection was justifiable. For after all, she had at

40.".....the calculus and the mass and the inverse ratio
are still on the loving lips. No longer does the student
hate the master's sermon on Love, but he walks in the
company of the philosophers through the Academy and the
Arcades and with a kind hand caresses old age."

Ibid., Il Giorno, p.87

41. See p.2, see foot note 4.

42. "I directed my Muse to make my Citizens wise and good."
Rossi, op. cit., pp. 184-185.

43. "And you arouse and enkindle the souls with your blows
full of unusual boldness".

Parini, op. cit., p.241.

one time conquered those who were now her conquerors:
Rome was never too lenient, and revenge is always sweet,
so he says:

"Ahi pazza Italia! Il tuo furor medesimo
Oltre l'Alpi, oltre 'l mar, destò le risa
Presso agli emoli tuoi, che di gelosa
Titol ti diero; e t'è serbato ancora
Ingiustamente."⁴⁴

However, he did not stop here in his reasoning.
For, despite the fact that he is not clearly nationalistic
and revolutionary as are most of the others who follow
him, still he did have those general tendencies. He glorified
Italy and deplored the avariciousness of other nations
in partitioning the peninsula. An early expression of fraternity
and brotherly love is contained within his writings as well
as innumerable references to liberty and freedom--and any
curtailing of these was thought of as tyranny. He dreamed
of a new people who, through their own efforts, would bring
forth a new nation. For that reason he was interested in
the American Revolution. But strangely enough, his interest
turned to the race which the colonists had conquered, enslaved,
or killed in order to acquire their wealth.

"Ecco la reggia, ecco de'prischi Incassi
Le tombe ensanguinate, ecco le genti
Di tre parti dell'orbe intorno o i massi
Ancor di scelerato oro lucenti."⁴⁵

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44. "Ah foolish Italy! your own furor beyond the Alps and beyond the sea inspired in your rivals mirth, and they gave you the title of jealous, which is still unjustly held against you."
Ibid., "Sonnet XVII", p. 241.
45. "Here are the bloody tombs and here the kingdom of the former Incas. Here are the peoples of three fourth of the earth around the masses of wickedly shining gold."
Ibid., "Sonnet XXXII", p. 249.

.....However, he went still further and warned Europe that both war and debt lay before her unless things were changed and that "la vostra tiranna" (your tyranny) would not be tolerated much longer.

These ideas, which were to become a catastrophe even before his death, had their origin in the eighteenth century, and were to be found scattered here and there in nearly everything. And Parini followed the general trend. For in Ascanio in Alba, a dramatic composition presented before Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria and Maria d'Este, Archduchess and Princess of Modena, is to be found one of his clearest expressions of both liberty and fraternity, as when the chorus sings:

"Con fren si placido
Reggi ogni core
Che più non bramasi
La libertà."⁴⁶

Then later Venus, when speaking to Ascanius, refers to "questo popolo eletto" (this elect people) and the poet, as he goes on, seems to wish to develop the idea of Italy as the chosen land, and the people of it as most blessed if they would only make use of their native talent. This high praise of Italy is spoken of Ascanius, and is indeed strong. For he says:

"Stranier son io.
Qua vaghezza mi guida
Di visitare i vostri colli ameni,
I puri stagni e per il verde piano.

46. "With such a placid rein you rule every heart that liberty is no longer sought.
Ibid., Ascanio in Alba, p. 318.

Queste vostre feconde acque correnti.
Tra voi, beate genti,
Fama è nel Lazio che Natura amica
Tutti raccolga i beni
Che coll'altre divide."⁴⁷

This perhaps is a more important idea than it seems at first glance. Since Italians had lost pride in the country as a whole, since they were, whenever possible, imitating the despised French, it was good still to find someone who said and who believed that Italy had more than other countries, and the expression of this thought played a greater part as time went on, and even such a simple line as "E la stirpe d'Enea occupi il mondo"⁴⁸ seems to be filled with deep significance and inspired the people to regain their former glory. For as has been said, "L'Italia è fatta or bisogna fare gl'italiani," and such ideas as this play a large part in developing pride in any race. But just as useful, if not more so, in developing a desire for a different form of government and a unified Italy, was the password fraternity. The first form, or maybe it should be called an early one, of this idea is expressed by Parini very simply, but also effectively:

"Al chiaror di que'bei rai,
Se l'amor fomenta l'ali,
Ad amor tutti i mortali
Il tuo cor solleverà."⁴⁹

47. "I am a foreigner and my wanderlust leads me to visit your beautiful hills, pure lakes, and these pure waters running through your green plains. Amongst you, O happy race, it is known that friendly Nature has gathered in Latium all the riches that she divides among the rest of the world." *Ibid.*, p. 326.

48. "And the offspring of Aneas occupies the world."
Ibid., p. 358.

49. "If love foment the wings in ^{the} ~~light~~ of those beautiful rays, it will move you to love all mortals."

He realizes it is good and says so. Of course, it must not be supposed that because he expresses the same idea as the revolutionaries that he was a rabid nationalist. It is perfectly true that he played his part in the Municipality of Milan in 1796 when Napoleon conquered Italy, for he fondly believed that his fellow-workers were "colleghe dei galantuomini" (second estate) and would be willing to sacrifice all for their country. But he was quickly undeceived, and that, combined with the rapacity and intemperance of the new conquerors, which had surpassed every limit, destroyed his fine hopes. So he quietly retired to private life as a professor, leaving the state to be torn by the various factions. And it is just as true that in 1799, he celebrated by a sonnet the victory of Italy of the Austrian-Russian army. For he thought Austria had ruled well, and his interests lay more in the improvement of the moral tone of the country than in political change. This does not mean that he did not wish political reform, for he did. His own feelings concerning the condition were quite plainly expressed in a sonnet "Quell'io che gia con lungo amaro carne", where he complained bitterly that no one would listen, but instead they scorned and derided him:

"Or sento anch'io sotto a le indomite arme
Tra la folla del popolo imminente,
Dietro a le rote del gran carro lente
Dall'offeso tiranno strascinarne."⁵⁰

50. "I feel myself being dragged behind the cart of the offended tyrant among a multitude of threatening people." Ibid., "Sonnet XXXIV", p. 251.

He naturally would feel that to some extent his efforts were in vain. He had in Il Giorno, which he refers to as a "lungo amaro carme" (long bitter song), derided their Courts of Love. He had dared to call the whole Italian nation to listen to him. They had listened and enjoyed him, but were no different than before. He seemed to be attempting the impossible. However, he died before he could see the results of the Napoleonic wars and the hatred of France and Austria rise to such a point that definite efforts for liberation were begun. This hatred of foreigners was no new thing. As has been said, it may be found in Dante, and straight up through the centuries. Parini was no exception to the rule. He opposed the attempts to copy French customs, manners, and literature. Throughout Il Giorno there may be found this dislike. He who in De' Principii delle belle lettere (1773), devoted much thought to the Italian language, both as to its unity and development, saw no reason for the nobility's making a very obvious effort to forget Italian and to learn French. And in "La Notte" he writes:

"Medita certo
Come al candor come al pudor si deggia
La cara figlia preservar, che torna
Doman da i chiostri, ove il sermon d'Italia
Pur giunse ad obliar, meglio erudita
De le Galliche grazie." 51

51. "He must be meditating how he is to preserve the candor and the modesty of his dear daughter, who returns tomorrow from the convent where she has forgotten the Italian sermon and learned the French graces."
Ibid., Il Giorno, pp. 126-127.

This was only a partial cause of his foreign hatred. The rest was based on the greed of other nations. He gave them the very good advice, "Di non tanto mangiar,⁵² se ber tu vuoi", but it was a futile gesture.

Despite the fact that he was a democrat of the democrats, he had little sympathy with the excesses of the French Revolution, and as time went on, he felt much the same as the rest of Europe, utterly disgusted. Also, he had little sympathy for reforms which originated at the bottom of society. For to his mind, it was the duty of the upper class to instigate and carry these out. The people should be well cared for, but not by themselves. It is because of this belief that he so highly approved of the paternalistic government of Joseph II under which he lived. He never lost his honest love of liberty, and Verri may well say of him: "Uomo deciso per la giustizia e fermo⁵³ contro civium ardor prava iubentium." It will be then his special merit to have wished and to have known how to make poetry, especially in the Odi and in Il Giorno, an efficacious instrument of virtue and of public and private property. For all the poems breed the same lively conception of human dignity, the same hatred of tyranny, an un-⁵⁴quenchable love of learning, and an inspiring morality.

52. "Do not eat so much if you wish to drink."

Ibid., "Sonnet II", p. 232.

53. "A just man who is decided and firm against civium ardor prava iubentium."

D'Ancona and Bacci, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 432.

54. F. Trail, History of Italian Literature, Boston, 1903, p. 220.

He was admired by many, especially the young revolutionary poet, Foscolo, who thought that he (Parini) embodied all that was fine and that he was the type from which a real Italy would grow. For Parini was a man who had done much for his era and who had maintained, despite all evils, that inner balance of faculty which is the sanity of the soul. His greatest strength lay in morality rather than in intellect. In fact, his intellect was nothing extraordinary. Yet it was this very quality--morality--which raised him above the other men of his day. It was that which gave him the content which is so necessary if a man is to be a great artist. It also gave him an insight into life which made him sad and profound, because it was based on the irony that lies in the things themselves. This irony was really an awakening of conscience in the midst of an empty and superficial society, and this awakening was the beginning of a new outlook which was in due time to lead to a unified and free Italy. So it can be seen that he was necessary for Italians if they were to reacquire the consciousness of their dignity as men and as citizens.

In a general summary, his satires may be said to revolve around family, country, humanity. They are the real basis of all his thought. Of course, it is possible to go back to the beginning and say that these come from a strong moral tendency. However that may be, these are his subjects. The first is especially dealt with in Il Giorno, where he shows great repugnance for the cicisbeo and where

he paints a very depressing picture of the moral degeneration of the family and of the love which this custom had produced. As for the second, it has already been said that he was not actually thinking of the political resurrection of an Italian state, but he did very effectively prepare for it by developing a definite interest in Italy as a whole, and by speaking against the rapid Gallicizing of both the language and literature as well as some of the social customs. The last was a very definite part of his general theory, and he believed a certain love of humanity was necessary. He deeply regretted the great social gulfs, partially because he was a real democrat, but also because he himself was of lowly birth. His most bitter attack on class is to be found in "Il Mezzogiorno", and in this he also affirms the equality of all men before nature.

From viewing these as a whole, he cannot be called a revolutionary, and from much of his work he can scarcely be called an advanced thinker. For he wished reform, not complete change. He hoped to shame the natural born leaders into giving up their foolish play and really taking their place in the political world. How well he succeeded is already known. His masterpiece became one of the first of those patriotic poems which helped to free Italy; but its value lay not in the fact that the nobility learned from him, but rather the bourgeoisie learned what should not be. When once they began, the end of that age had come. So for

the added emphasis he gave, he shall be remembered, and although it is not possible to think of him in the same way as Alfieri, "still by the inevitable law of association he walks down the ages arm in arm with him,"⁵⁵ partially because they are contemporaries and partially because they represent the same desire, only from different sides.

More emotional if less delicate and ironical is Vittorio Alfieri. He is the new man, standing before all, and pointing definitely towards the future, which Parini only felt, but did not clearly express. He stands away from and beyond his contemporaries. While Parini, in much that he did and in much that he said, was a man of his age. Alfieri, although his life up to twenty-seven was no different from others of his class, felt the change in the air, felt that he had certain ideas which must be expressed, no matter the form. He was reaching out for the future and many times he came quite close to touching it. He wished to reach the people and make them feel the full force of what he had to say, and because he desired this so much, there is a very definite feeling that his work lacks shadows. There is the force majeure, and beyond that nothing. He was so eager to reach his goal, he failed to realize that others could not or maybe would not care to go in the same fashion. Yet in him the note of provincialism, of localism, is not found, and it was just this sectionalism⁵⁶ which was one of the factors in retarding Italian unity.

55. Trail, op. cit., p. 240.

56. G. Megaro, Vittorio Alfieri, New York, 1930, p. 40.

Few men of letters in any country have had so much to do with the development of national sentiment. He was determined to arouse the Italians to become one and independent. It was towards this goal that all his writings led.

His most outstanding characteristic is his hatred of tyranny and love of freedom, and one who reads him is immediately conscious of the intensity of his feelings. He once wrote: "L'arte mia son le Muse: la predominante passion, l'odio della tirannide l'unico scopo d'ogni mio pensiero, parola e scritto, il combatterla sempre, sotto qualunque o placido, o frenetico, o stupido aspetto ella si manifesti o si asconda."⁵⁷ The result of this was that he poured out his soul in drama--the only way he could think of to lift his countrymen into that pure ether where liberty lives, where oppression ceases, and true virtue reigns. He wished to make the theater the place where men learned to be free, strong, and generous; to live in true virtue, to be intolerant of every violence, to love their country (patria), to be truly conscious of their own rights, and to be, in all their beliefs, right and magnanimous. For if the new Italy, of which he dreamed, were to become a reality, man as man must be revived, and it seemed to him that tragedy, the depiction of the heroic, was best fitted to portray the new man who was fermenting in his mind, and in fact was

57. "My predominant passion is the hatred of tyranny; the only aim of all my thoughts, words, and writings is to combat it always in every form, be it mild, frenetic or stupid, in which it manifests or hides itself."
V. Alfieri, "Lettere", in I Grandi Autori, edited by G. Lipparini, Milan, 1930, II, 129.

himself. Yet this new man, just as Alfieri, was in the old dress. "His patriotism, liberty, dignity, inflexibility, morality, his sense of right, of duty, that inner world of consciousness which had ceased to be felt in Italian life and art, came to him not from his own world, but from a study of the ancient world joined with his own personality. The Italy of the future that he proclaimed was ancient Italy revived, restored to her power and glory -- the 'shall be' is the 'has been'". He developed the political soul: his law was Country, his god was the Nation, his virtue was Liberty.

But to return to his major theme, the dominant struggle in the world was between tyranny and liberty. His references to these are constant. One of his tragedies, Bruno Primo (1789), is dedicated to "George Washington, liberator of America", to whom he had said earlier in a letter: "Il solo nome del liberator dell'America puo stare in fronte della tragedia del liberatore dei Roma", and also "Felice voi, che alla tanta (gloria) vostra anche potuto dar base sublime ed eterna! .. l'amor bella patria dimostra
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to coi fatti". Then, too, he wrote "Odes to Free America",

58. DeSanctis, op. cit., II, 896-897.

59. "Only the name of the liberator of America is able to be in the front of the tragedy of the liberator of Rome. --- Oh happy you, who have been able to give a sublime and eternal foundation to your great glory -- the love of the fatherland shown by deeds."
V. Alfieri, "Lettere", in I Grandi Autori, edited by G. Lipparini, Milan, 1930, II, (128-129)

in which the American Revolutionary movement is exalted.

The central thought in his selection of subject matter for his tragedies was always liberty--purposeful liberty. His first tragedy, Filippo (1783), is a portrayal of a Spaniard, and he is so described as to arouse a constantly growing hatred. He, himself, spoke of "la
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fredda atrocita di Filippo", which he thought was the main note of the play. In Polinice (1783), the lust for power leads to fratricide. Antigone (1783) tells of the death of the heroine in resisting the power of a tyrant, Creon. Timoleone (1785) deals with the conflict between two brothers. Bruto primo (1789) represents the attempt of the Consul Brutus to free his country from tyranny. In Bruto Secondo (1789) the son Brutus must kill his own father for the sake of liberty. The tragedy Agide (1783) reveals a king, who imbued with love of country, lays down his life to the tyrant who governs it. Merope (1785) illustrates the fall of a tyrant. Congiura de' Pazzi (1783) is the story of Raymond who attempted to liberate Tuscany from the Medici
61
oppressors. He makes the motive of freedom a justification of this attempt on the lives of the Medicis, and this was an attitude wholly new to the Italians. From it comes these excerpts of force and beauty:

60. "The cold atrocity of Philip"

61. V. Alfieri, Filippo, in Tragedie Scelte, Milan, I, 16.

61. "Other tragedies representing the horror of tyranny and the love of freedom are Virginia (1783), Agamemnone (1783), Oreste (1783), Don Garzia (1789), Rosemunda (1783), Ottavia (1785), Maria Stuarda (1789), Sofonista (1789)."
Megaro, op. cit., pp. 42-45.

"To extirpate those seeds
Of liberty, ingrained by Nature in all hearts,
Not only years, but arts, devices must be used.

By slaves the tyrant only,
Not the tyranny is feared."⁶²

Thus he treated the various and sundry types of tyranny, but in each and every one, he presented the situation in such a fashion that it aroused very definite and profound emotions in all who either read them or saw them acted. Above all, they were impressed with the loftiness of purpose. The real value of his dramas lay not in the fact that they presented definite theories which could be put into practice, but rather they had an emotional appeal which is, in such a case as this, much more valuable. For in order to become free, a country must understand all sides of freedom. To some it might seem that his was merely a futile gesture, yet as Alfieri says in a letter to Paoli: "...Lo scrivere tragedie di libertà nella lingua d'un popolo non libero, forse con ragione parrà una mera stoltezza a chi altro non vede che le presenti cose. Ma chiunque dalla perpetua vicenda delle passate argomenta le future, così per avventura giudicar non dovrà." ⁶³ Again he arises against

62. Trail, op. cit., pp.254-255.

63. "To write the tragedies of liberty in the language of a people not free, perhaps with reason will appear a mere stupidity to those who do not see beyond the present. But whoever sees the future from the past history ought not to venture judgement."

V. Alfieri, "Lettere", in I Grandi Autori, edited by G. Lipparini, Milan, 1931, II, 128.

his detractors, and by means of an epigram explains the why of his faults:

"Mi trovan duro?
Anch'io lo so
Pensar li fo
Taccia ho d'oscuro?
Mi schiarirà
Poi libertà,"⁶⁴

However, clearer and better sources of his political opinions are his prose works, Della tirannide (On Tyranny, 1777), Del principe e delle lettere (On Government and Literature, 1786), and Panegirico di Plinio a Traiano (Panegyric of Pliny to Trajan, 1785). the first, Della tirannide, is dedicated to "Liberty, Divine Liberty," and he defines tyranny as the power to violate the law, and a tyrant in the same way, as one who violates the law or has the potentiality to do so. Any society that admits such a state of affairs is a tyranny; every people that tolerates it is enslaved. Almost everywhere in Europe, he perceived nothing but despotism, nothing but the faces of slaves. People remained in this state due to a sense of mutual fear which leads them to live in blind obedience, and the tyrant to strengthen and never modify his oppression. The best method to destroy such a form, according to Alfieri, was violence. However, he did not recognize the strength and power of public opinion. Yet he felt that it was better for the tyrant to be so cruel and unjust that finally the people would rise

64. "Do they find me hard, I also know it, I make them think, Am I obscure, Then liberty will explain me." Ibid., Epigrame", p. 105.

and end his power. He exalts the 'theory of the dagger' and urges revenge, only it must be not only private revenge, but also the wish to reestablish true liberty.

The two main ideas which run through this work are, first, the necessity of the overthrow of the tyrant, and second, a belief in certain natural rights and popular sovereignty. He says that "any government, even a pure democracy, cannot and should not accord any other indulgence (to the people) than that of never letting them lack bread, justice, or fear. For any time that one of these three things is wanting to them, every good society can in an instant be overthrown by them, and can be completely
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destroyed." Probably what he really desired for a government was the moderate constitutional monarchy of the middle nineteenth century. He does not definitely state this, but he realized that the people should and must be represented by one of their own members, and that it was not sufficient for a just and good government to be handed down from above, but that they were not capable of ruling entirely by themselves. He was not an advanced democrat in any sense of the word. Such people as Cavour and D'Azeglio represent the type he wished to see at the head of the government. For Alfieri was a nobleman and prided himself on not being of lowly birth. Yet he was capable of seeing the faults of his own class, and he hoped they would

improve in the future. In reality, the form of government was not of vital importance to him; he wished to see the fall of despotism and the rise of liberty; in what form it came was not of great matter. The problem was to make the people feel the necessity of freedom and government by law, and to make them willing to lay down their lives for these. He himself felt a great love for civil liberty, and he wished to inculcate it into the Italian peoples. In the last part of Della tirannide, he asks if assuming tyranny were abolished in Italy, what would be the best government? The answer he makes is that only those Italians who had studied the problems could provide for Italy. He realized, as few did, that what was good for one country was not necessarily good for another.

He hated tyranny, he emphasized the need for liberty. But the latter was not anarchy; for he, as did the English, believed in government by law where all had political freedom. Patriotic feeling was definitely connected with his desire for freedom, and these two principles were important factors in the development of modern nationalism. So the propaganda did much to arouse the national sentiment of the people. This type of propaganda, joined with the effects of the French Revolution, gave Italy the necessary impulse to throw off the domination which she had borne for so long.

The thesis of Del principio e delle lettere is that the promotion of true literature and the existence of despotism are incompatible. True literature cannot exist side

by side with despotism, for it becomes debased and perverted to the use of the prince. And if this occurs then it does not contain truth nor teach virtue, both of which it should do. So, in order for it to flourish, there must be an atmosphere of liberty. He dreamed of a future when all writers would exalt liberty, enlighten and inspire unfree and oppressed people with the love of truth, of freedom, of the great, of the useful, and of the righteous. Above all, he believed it possible for the writers to free Italy. He pointed this out to them as their duty, not only for literature, but for their country. He desired to see a literature that was no longer filled with the spirit of compromise, that was no longer mediocre. His own works become the best example of his theory, especially his tragedies, which were filled with pleas for freedom and virtue. He wanted to see people write as Italians, not as natives of one certain region. He believed the Italian language superior to all others, and as Parini, he wished to bring to the peninsula a unity in tongue which would aid in the greater unity of the people. The whole book is an attempt to instill a political conscience in the country, and to awaken a sense of liberty and patriotism. His success of the moment was doubtful, but its importance in the nineteenth century was great, and Alfieri was considered as one of the foremost nationalists.

In his work, Panegirico di Plinio a Traiano, he has Pliny urge Trajan to abandon the spirit and forms of

the empire, to cease to be emperor, to become a citizen of Rome, and to restore the reign of those virtues that had made the Roman Republic so great. Then the oppressed people would regain their love of the fatherland, true courage, ambition to do great things, and to attain real fame. He stressed the patriotic virtues of the ancients, and also the political institutions of Rome. He attempted to show the Italians how closely they were connected with the past. Their language, more closely than any other, resembled the Latin. Roads, monuments and buildings constantly reminded⁶⁶ them of the past glory. Why not realize their connection with this and attempt to regain some, if not all, of the former glory? His tragedies may be regarded as the beginning of the neo-classical patriotic literature. He had idealized the ancient, and in it he put all the virtues he had sought to bring out in his other works. However, he emphasized, civil, not national, liberty.

His views on religion were nearly the opposite of those held in Rome, for according to him, it was another of the great aids to tyranny. He was led to the conclusion that it was impossible to be both free and a Catholic. For the Church had so many holds upon the people that if they followed the rules of the Church they could make no progress. He spoke quite bitterly about both the pope and the priests, for they were bound by no ties and felt few duties or obli-

66. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

gations. His sonnet on Rome, written in 1777, is famous as an expression of the deep bitterness of feeling against the priests:

"Vuota insalubre region, che Stato
Ti vai nomando; aridi campi incolti;
Squalidi, oppressi, estenuati volti
Di popol rio codardo e insanguinato:
Prepotente, e non libero senato
Di vili astuti in lucid' ostro involti;
Ricchi patrizj, e più che ricchi stolti;
Prence, cui fa sciocchezza altrui beato:
Città, non cittadini; augusti tempj,
Religion non già; leggi, che ingiuste
Ogni lustro cangiar vede, ma in peggio:
Chiavi, che compre un dì schiudeano agli empj
Del ciel le porte, or per età vetuste:
Oh, se' tu Roma, o d'ogni vizio il seggio?" 67

This did not mean that he was an atheist, but merely that he, along with most thinking people of his age, wished to limit the power of the Church to purely spiritual matters and to separate it from all and any government. He said:
"Belief in God, in short, has never harmed any people,
rather it has aided many." 68 This definitely anti-Catholic attitude had much influence, and added to the rapidly in-

67. "Oh empty, insalubrious land, untilled arid fields,
That call yourselves a state;
Squalid, oppressed, emaciated faces
Of a wicked, cowardly and blood-stained people:
An insolent, not a free senate,
Made up of base schemers, garbed in flashing crimson;
Rich patricians, and more than rich, stupid;
A prince, whom the stupidity of others makes holy:
City, but not citizens; august temples,
But not religion; laws unjust;
Which are changed ever so often, but for worse:
Keys, which at a price of yore unlocked the gates of Heaven
to the wicked, have now fallen into disuse:
Oh, are you Rome, or the seat of all vice?"
Translation from Megaro, op. cit., p.80.
The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, ed. by St. John Lucas,
Oxford, 1925, p.376.

68. Megaro, op. cit., p.84.

creasing discontent of both Catholics and non-Catholics with the church. And it must not be forgotten that anti-Catholicism is generally connected with nationalism; for the Church represented both despotism and foreign domination, aside from the fact that it opposed, whenever possible, any attempts towards liberalism or freedom. Alfieri gave, in place of the strong Catholicism which he wished to destroy, the beginnings of the religion of the fatherland. He lacked the exaltation and the mysticism of Mazzini, but he was able to arouse, a definite emotion, and he furnished a basis upon which others could construct their ideas.

Up to this point, Alfieri's ideals and dreams for the future have been pointed out, and now his actual contributions to modern Italian patriotism and nationalism shall be discussed. The first point is that his favorite theme of liberty is not always found in classic form, but he frequently wrote of it in connection with contemporary Italy. In prose and in verse, he spoke of the servile conditions and of the absolute necessity for regeneration. He wished one people, both culturally and politically. He believed there could be no patria where man did not exercise freely and under security his natural rights. So, of course, patria, to him did not mean the land where one was born. This belief explains his statement in a letter to the president of the French Republic: "Il mio nome è Vittorio Alfieri: il luogo dove io son nato, l'Italia: nessuna terra mi è patria."⁶⁹

69. "My name is Vittorio Alfieri: the place where I was born, Italy: no land is my fatherland."
V. Alfieri, "Lettere", in I Grandi Autori, ed. by G. Lipparini, Milan, 1931, p. 129.

He could never regard a country which was under a tyrant as his patria. So until liberty was established in Italy, he was without a fatherland.

While admiring the past and exalting the great
Italians -- "O gran padre Alighieri," ⁷⁰ "al gran⁷¹ Torquato,"
he also thought of the future when Italy would no longer be
in chains. The dedication of Bruto Secondo is to the
"Future Italian people...to the generous and free Italians."⁷²
No man had heretofore addressed them in just this manner.
He was the beginning of the Risorgimento. His faith in a
people so apparently corrupted and slothful and in their
future regeneration shows in him a profundity of outlook
nearly miraculous. For certainly, in that which he saw
around him, there was little cause for hope. Alfieri again
shows his faith in a sonnet which he addresses to the future
Italy:

"Giorno verrà, tornerà il giorno, in cui
Redivivi omai gl'Itali staranno
In campo audaci, e non col ferro altrui
In vil difesa, ma dei Galli a danno.
Al forte fianco sproni ardenti dui,
Lor virtù prisca, ed i miei carmi, avranno:
Onde, in membrar ch' essi già fur ch'io fui,
D'irresistibil fiamma avvamperanno.
E armati allor di quel furor celeste
Spirato in me dell' opre dei lor avi,
Faran mie rime a Gallia esser funeste.

70. The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, op. cit., p.370.

71. Ibid., p.371

72. Megaro, op. cit., p.97.

Gli odo già dirmi: 'O Vate nostro, in pravi
Secoli nato, eppur creator hai queste
Sublimi età che profetando andavi! " 73

He reiterates in various places this same thought, that the day will come when Italy will be restored to her former glory, when she will be revived and take her place as a nation and not as a heterogeneous collection of small states. He realized her vices, and he did not hesitate to speak of them, for under it all he felt certain that she had a people, who, if aroused, could make a nation, and a great one. For after all, had not Rome once held all the known world in dominion? Aside from this fact, he was convinced that every nation should govern itself, and that the national hate should always fight both injustice and evil. He himself fought the foreign domination, and was the first after Machiavelli to affirm insistently the high ideal of an Italy, politically unified, and his faith in this dream.

73. "The day will come, the day will return,
In which Italians, alive again at last,
Will fight bravely in the battlefield, and not with
other's arms
In cowardly defense, but attacking the Gauls.
At their side, two ardent spurs
They will have, one, their pristine courage, the other,
my songs.
So that recalling what they were, and what I was,
They will burn with an irresistible fire.
And armed then with that heavenly fire
Breathed into me by the works of their fathers,
They will make my rhymes deadly to the Gauls.
Already I hear them say: O our Seer, born in wretched times,
Albeit you have created these
Sublime years...as you were wont to prophesy."
Translated in Megaro, *op. cit.*, p.124.
The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, *op. cit.*, p.377.

In the beginning of *Il Misogallo* (The French Hater), he prophesies that Italy then "inerme, divisa, avvilita, non libera ed impotente," will be one day undoubtedly revived⁷⁴ "virtuosa, magnanima, libera ed una."

So he played his part, touching both the past and the future, yet he lived in the present. He was in France at the beginning of the Revolution, although he fled in 1793. It was during the progress of the French Revolution that he manifested a particularly acute sense of nationalism. His reaction is only another of the enormous influences of the Revolution in arousing national sentiment. At first, he was very much pleased with the trend of the situation and felt that at last freedom was coming into its own. He praised the rizing of the Bastille in Parigi sbastigliata (Ode to the Storming of the Bastille, 1789). He deplored the atrocities, but almost considered them necessary, and finally he opened his heart in the happy hope that the King would carry out his promises. He says:

".....già già sicura
Torna del re la maestade a patto
Meglio adeguato omai:
Già espulsi ha gli empi e rechiamato ha il giusto.
Nè a re lo errar più mai
Concede il Nazional Consesso augusto."⁷⁵

74. "unarmed, divided, humbled, shackled and impotent,".... courageous, magnanimous, free and unified."
Rossi, op. cit., p. 203.

75. "Already is the king's majesty reassured,
On terms better adjusted at last.
Already have the impious been expelled,
And the good men recalled.
Nor will the august National Assembly
Allow a King to err again."
Translated in Megaro, op. cit., p. 55..Italian, p. 149.

And this was the first and last light that the Revolution raised in his soul; from then on their deeds only aroused bitter hatred. For he felt that if the French had stopped and worked out a scheme of government by Louis XVI, based on legitimate authority, the Reign of Terror might have been prevented. However, he as Parini, had no use for their excesses, nor did he understand or like their degeneration into a tyranny under the name of liberty. It disturbed his idealistic soul. The result of all this conflict of feeling was Il Misogallo. His judgement of the Revolution coincided with Manzoni's, only the former was passionate, while the latter was rational.

It was a furious attack on the French people and institutions and the dedication was to "The Past, Present, and Future Italy....the August Matron, for so long the principal seat of all human wisdom and values." ⁷⁶ He continued, insisting that Italy would one day be free--that unity should come to her whom nature had so separated from the rest of Europe. In Il Misogallo he asserted that the sole basis of Italy's political existence is to be the hatred of the French. Hatred seems to be the basic element of national unity to Alfieri. He wrote: 'The hatreds of one nation against another, having always been--for it cannot be otherwise--the necessary fruit of injuries reciprocally received or feared, cannot therefore be either unjust or base. On the contrary, they are a very precious part of the paternal

76. Megaro, op. cit., p. 100.

heritage, only such hatreds have wrought those true political miracles that are afterwards so much admired in history.⁷⁷ He, himself, would teach the Italians to abhor the French; to despise them, for they were causing a most dreadful and bloody harm to her. But at the same time, he realized that it was necessary for a return to Italian traditions to take place. They could no longer afford to imitate, but must create a new life through their own forces. He attacked the fashion of imitating the French:

"Mi vien da rider, quand' io sento dire
Che un birbo o sciocco pensa alla francese.
Il vestire, il ciarlare, l'arricciarsi,
Il ballare il rubare, ed il vantarsi,
Son cose queste ch' ei può avere apprese
Da quel gentil paese:
Ma il pensare e il sentire,
Tanto prender si può da que' scimiozzi
Quanto attinger si può fuoco dai pozzi."⁷⁸

This was perfectly natural, for France had apparently promised the Golden Age, and she had not succeeded in accomplishing it. He was writing at a time when the true results of the Revolution were still hidden in the future, and so his reaction is perfectly understandable.

Nevertheless, he does seem to go to extremes, for he said that they had not only previously spread corruption

77. *Ibid.* pp. 100-101.

78. "Laugh I must, when I hear say
That a fool or rogue thinks in the French way,
To dress, to chatter, to curl his hair,
To dance, to steal, and to boast,
Such are the things he may have learned from that
country fair:
But as for thinking and feeling,
So much may be learned from those apes
As fire from wells may be drawn."
Translated in Megaro, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
V. Alfieri, "Contro i Francesi", in *I Grandi Autori*, Milan, 1931, p. 106.

through other nations, but that now they were disseminating anarchy, indulging in cruelty, and bringing about servitude. He even turned to criticize their language. He urged Italy to forget her dialects and her French and to learn Italian. He devoted much time to praising the Italian language, which he believed preferable to all others, surpassing them in "wealth of diction and harmony of sound."⁷⁹ But by all of his criticism of the period, it is not to be understood that he was denying the principles upon which the Revolution was based, but rather that the means adopted to carry them out were wrong. He even said the French had no right to call it a revolution because the word should denote the transition from slavery to freedom and in the case of France it was only a passage from the servitude under the one to the servitude under the many. Both were wrong because they trampled on the ideal of liberty. He also differed from them in his conception of a republic:

È Repubblica il suolo ove divine
Leggi son base a umane leggi e scudo;
Ove null' uomo impunemente crudo
All' uom puo farsi, e ognuno ha il suo confine;
Ove non è chi mi sgomenti o inchine;
Ov' io 'l cuore e la mente appien dischiudo;
Ov' io di ricco non son fatto ignudo;
Ove a ciascuno il ben di tutti è fine;
È Repubblica il suolo ove illibati
Costumi han forza, e il giusto sol primeggia;
Nè i tristi van del pianto altrui beati.
Sei Repubblica tu, Gallica greggia,
Che muta or servi a rei pazzenti armati,

79. Megaro, op. cit., p. 107.

La cui vil feccia sulla tua galleggia?"

To him, the French government was pure slavery and an insult to true and sublime liberty. But not only did the French insult liberty by the fashion in which they misused it, but also they presumed to teach it to Italy who had taught all lofty things to others. He asked:

"Di Libertà Maestri i Galli? E a cui?
A noi fervide ardite Itale menti,
D' ogni alta cosa insegnanti altrui?
Schiavi or siam, sì; ma schiavi almen frementi:
Non quali, o Galli, e il foste e il siete vui;
Schiavi, al poter qual ch' ei pur sia, plaudenti." 81

He even went so far as to predict the rise of a man who would be more thanking, saying:

80. "That land is a republic, where divine
Laws are the bases of human laws and their shield,
Where no man can with impunity be cruel to other men,
And where there is a limit placed on any man's excesses;
Where there is no one to threaten me or to kneel before me,
Where I may open full my mind and my heart,
Where I am not shorn of my riches,
That land is a republic, where stainless
Customs hold sway and the just alone lead,
Where the wretched do not glory in the sorrows of others,
Are you a republic, herds of Frenchmen,
Who now in awe are obeying wretched beggars in arms
Whose base lees float over yours."

Translated by Megaro, op. cit., p. 117.

The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, op. cit., p. 375.

81. "The French teachers of liberty, and to whom?
To us fervid Italian minds, to us,
Teachers of others in all lofty things?
Slaves we are now, but rebellious at least,
Not such slaves as you were and still are, O Frenchmen,
Slaves applauding power whatever it be."

Translated by Megaro, op. cit., p. 118.

The Oxford Book of Italian Verse, op. cit. p. 375.

"..... Omai Gallia si regge
Non più a Re, come pria, bensì a Regina,
Promossa al sacro onor la Guilliotina:
Ma di si ria pedina,
Che in isposa al Terror Promessa s'è,
Rinascerà ben tosto un Più-che-Re." 82

Nevertheless, his active hatred of France is not the really important thing in *Il Misogallo*. It is rather that the poem should be regarded as an expression of national jealousy and a desire to give to Italian culture the spirit of independence. It was written at a period when a definite effort was being made to free Italy from the intellectual domination of France, and at the same time there began to develop those practical forces that were to lead to Italian unity. They, who had preached liberty for all, gave it to no one whom they conquered. The result was that the desire to be free became the outstanding desire, and France was generally regarded in the light of a tyrant.

It is strange that this work, born of personal rancor, of individualistic conceit, should be one of the most important nationalist documents in modern history. It is a conspicuous example of the change which was brought by the Revolutions resulting in emphasis of the national

82. "Now France is no longer governed by a king
But forsooth by a queen,
Lady Guillotine by name,
Promoted to the sacred honor.
But of such a wicked strumpet,
Who had betrothed herself to Terror,
One will be born who will be more than king?"
Translated by Megaro, *op. cit.*, p.118...Italian, p.159.

element. Liberty is no longer the abstract thing which was discussed in the eighteenth century by the philosophers, but it is now connected and identified with national liberty. However, it must not be assumed that Alfieri had reached the stage of thought where he could make actual plans for the unification of the Peninsula. He had not, rather he based all his thinking on a fervent hope of a distant day when he would have, if he could live that long, a patria. His was a voice of courage, and he did not bemoan the qualities which were missing in the people, but insisted that their capacities were great, and that the future would be a great one also. He clearly understood that the risorgimento must not only be a political change, but moral and literary reformation as well; although he did not stress the latter.

The influence he exercised on those who followed was great. He had had much effect on literature, and he became the symbol of the ideals which were to lead Italy to the position of one of the great Powers of Europe. He became the apostle of all parties; they all went to him for inspiration. Parini admired him and said in Il Dono:

"Odiator de' tiranni,
Pugnat, onde Melpomene
Lui fragl'itali spirti vinco armò."⁸³

83. "Hater of tyrants,
Fight, then Melpomene
Arms him among the conquering Italian spirits."
D'Ancona and Bacci, op. cit., p. 551.

Leopardi felt his influence and realized his full value saying, "In su la scena mosse guerra a'tiranni."⁸⁴ Foscolo and Pellico express their enthusiasm and even Manzoni, as a youth, admired Alfieri. Gioberti believed he was a restorer of national Italian genius, and had no master. "Il rinnovamento del ceto civile nella Penisola, e la creazione Dell' Italia laicale, è dovuta a Vittorio Alfieri, che, nuovo Dante, fu il vero secolareggiatore del genio italico nell' età più vicina, e diede agli spiriti quel forte impulso, che ancor dura, e porterà quando che sia i suoi frutti,"⁸⁵ while Carducci addressed him "Hail, Oh great father." His influence included far more than the few mentioned here. For he was truly, as Byron said, "the great name of his age."

The strangest thing of all is the way the very Revolution which he had attacked so bitterly was more than any one thing the reason for his great popularity. And later, during the Napoleonic period, this popularity increased. His tragedies were played as examples of liberty and equality. Il Misogallo was pushed into the background, and people forgot it. His political implications were not missed by

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84. "In him the stage made war on tyrants."
G. Leopardi, Ad Angelo Mai, in I Canti, Edited by M. Scherillo, Milan, 1911, p. 174.
85. "The renewal of the civil rank in the Peninsula, and the creation of lay Italians, is owed to Vittorio Alfieri, who, a new Dante, was the true secularizer of the Italian genius in the previous age, and gave to the minds that strong impulse, which still lasts, and will sometime bear fruit."
D'Ancono and Bacci, op. cit., p. 553.

the rising generation, and he was appreciated more for this than for his literary qualities. Also, he became more or less a hero, for the most widely read of all his works, without a doubt, La Vita (Autobiography). The man portrayed in it, whether true or not, is a very intriguing personality, both for his independence of thought and of action. This freedom expressed the hidden desire of a people closely restricted by governmental regulations, and they became more and more interested in obtaining it. He knew what he wished to say, and he said it. There are certainly no subtleties in La Vita. It sometimes seems that his hatred of the French outweighs his love of Italy; that his hatred of tyranny outweighs his love of liberty. However, this was due to his method of expression rather than to any real failure on his part. He was by nature a fiery, hasty person, and it was easy for him to express himself in this way. But it should be remembered that it was from just these sentiments that a spirit of nationalism began to develop. He says: "To the few, to the free, and to the strong, I speak."⁸⁶ And he spoke to them of a "hope for a united and independent country, founded on liberty, free of foreign intellectual influence, one, culturally and politically. This vision was complete in him and justifies the appraisal of him as the greatest forerunner of Italy's national and political conscience."⁸⁷ However, he died a sad

86. Trail, op. cit., p. 257.

87. Megaro, op. cit., p. 148.

man, cursing his century, and entrusting his fame to posterity:

"Ma non insulta l'ombra mia nè muta starassi,
no: fia de'tiranni scempio
la sempre neva mia voce temuta.
Ne lunge molto, al mio cessar, d'ogni empio
veggio la vil possanza al suol caduta,
me forse altrui di liber' uomo esempio."88

As can easily be seen, he had a greater influence on nationalism than had Parini, but many of his efforts would have been much less effective in the next period if Parini had not had some effect, in fact, a great deal of effect. The two men are entirely different, yet the part they played in Italian history links them inevitably together. They represent the end of an epoch, with Alfieri being much closer to the new than Parini. But there can be no doubt that they have definitely left the old. They soon came to be classified as early patriots, and although their actual part was small, their influence was far-reaching, and all who came after them were conscious of their efforts to revive Italy.

Vincenzo Monti (1778-1827) is the next step in the transition. He, the last poet of the past, was considered throughout his life as the first of living poets. To know him, one is compelled to make a thorough historical study of both the French Revolutionary period and the Napoleonic era. For while Alfieri and Parini both expressed only the

88. "But my shade shall not be useless or mute--no: my voice, as living and fearless as ever, shall break the tyrants. It will not be long after my passing that I shall behold the power of the wicked brought low, and myself the exemplar of a free man."
Translated in DeSanctis, op. cit., p. 893-894--Italian in same place.

the revolutionary spirit of the age, Monti deals with events which were actually taking place. Both his writings and his thoughts are inextricably entwined with the political changes which were taking place. In fact, his works have often been called journalism in verse. He was living in an age of fermenting ideas, and he very definitely received their impress, as did the rest of the men of culture. He was highly emotional and was intensely interested in the particular event, regardless of the whole movement. This interest in the particular lasted until the next change, and then once again he was overwhelmed by his enthusiasm. "It is true he was never anything but a Liberal; but then in that era everyone was a Liberal; even the reactionaries shouted, 'Liberty!'-- and in the name of Liberty he glorified each government as it arose." ⁸⁹ He was always fashionable. When tragedy was the thing, he played Aristodemo (1776), written in the Alfierian style. When the French Revolution broke out in a sea of blood, La Bass-yilliana (1793) appeared. After Napoleon's victory he changed his song and turned and praised him in the name of liberty. When Napoleon fell, and yet another change took place with the re-entrance of Austria as a great Power, she in turn was glorified in the name of liberty. The same maxims (the maxims which played such a large part in making Italy) were applied to each new case as it arose. He twisted the ideas to suit his own needs, and the result is that his

89. DeSanctis, op. cit., p. 891.

writing resounds and echoes with the words "justice," "liberty," "Country," "virtue," and "Italy." However, it would be unfair to accuse him of being purely hypocritical; rather he was highly sensitive, and each time he changed his side, he probably thought that he had at last reached the truth. He was carried away by his own enthusiasm and imagination. Of course, he was not a strong moral character as is perfectly obvious from his actions. He lacked the social independence of Alfieri and the moral strength of Parini. He would have preferred to remain on one side, but since he could not, he chose to be on the successful side, for he had no desire to be a martyr in any way or to any cause. His greatest fault was that he refused to admit his own shortcomings, and that is the real reason for his unpopularity. He had a marvelous gift of versification, but he lacked the "high seriousness" which makes a great poet. He reflected his public, and no one received more applause in his day.

His writing, a greater part of which is political, national, and patriotic, falls into three periods which can well be classified in the way that he was. For his fellow countrymen laughingly said he had had three titles in his life, the first "Abate" Monti, the second "Cittadine" Monti, and the third "Cavaliere" Monti. This is perfectly true, and his work is an accurate reflection of these changes. The first, that of Abate Monti, is chiefly concerned with his connection with the splendid court of Pius VI, in which his contemporaries believed themselves to have revived the Golden

Age of Pericles and of Leon X. The first years of the Revolution might be considered the end of this. During this time, he wrote a great many poems; some praising the Pope, some dealing with contemporary events, and others on the generally accepted Arcadian subjects. The Feroniade (1832), which he began during this time, he worked on throughout his life and died leaving still uncompleted. It was in praise of Pius VI and his efforts to drain the Pontine marshes. He gave to him the highest praise and the poem ends:

" che l'opra
Immortal, gloriosa ed infinita
Ad un più grande eroe serba il destino.
Lo diran Pio le genti, e di quel nome
Sesto sarà " 90.

Its importance lies in the fact that it represents the general tendency of the age towards social, economic, and political reform. These were important results of the eighteenth century and the recognition of them as being important enough to write about was an interesting aspect of the age. He naturally, being still of the classical period, treats La Feroniade as a myth. He tells the story of Feronia, a nymph loved by Jove, and then persecuted by Juno, who transformed the land, at one time cultivated and flowering, into a swamp.

Meanwhile, his peaceful existence at the Foman court became disturbed by the difficulties of the French, and, as a result of the French Revolution, one of his most famous, if not

90. "For destiny is keeping this glorious, infinite, and immortal work for a greater hero. The people will call him Pius, the sixth of that name."
V. Monti, La Feroniade, in Liriche, Tragedie, e Poemi, I Classici Edizione Florentia, Florence, 1926, p. 776.

his most famous, poem was written. In 1793, Hugo Bassville, a secretary at the French Legation at Naples, came to Rome in order to propagate the revolutionary ideas and met his death through the hands of plebian fanatics. This event was enough for Monti. He wrote La Bassvilliana (1793), which is a ferocious attack against the Revolution. He imagines Bassville, dead, ascending to Heaven, but not able to enter Paradise because of his sin. His expiation was to be a witness of all the horrors of the Reign of Terror, and to realize just what evils the Revolution had produced in the world. The method Monti used in telling the story closely resembled that of Dante, and his contemporaries saluted him as "Dante redivivo",⁹¹ although the title was really undeserved.

The poem is filled with hideous descriptions of the horrors and the Revolution is presented in the worst possible light. One of the descriptions of the mobs begins:

"Libera vede andar la colpa, e schiava
La virtù, la giustizia, e sue bilance
In man del ladro e di vil ciurma prava."⁹²

As for Paris itself, there is nothing to be said,⁹³ except that it is the "città di tutti i mali". He reaches his greatest heights when he describes the death of Louis XVI, of whom he says:

91. Rossi, op. cit., III, 240.

92. "The crime seems to go free, and virtue is enslaved, and the scales of justice are in the hands of thieves and the depraved mob."
Monti, op. cit., p.498.

93. "city of all evils."
Ibid., p.503

"E il tuo buon rege, il re più grande, in atto
D'agno innocente fra digiuni lupi,
Sul letto de'ladroni a morir tratto." 94

The whole death scene is quite supernatural and ends with Bassville's prostrating himself before the spirit of Louis and telling him the whole story. After this, the cherubims gather the blood of Louis and pour it down on the earth. The result is that all minds are aroused by it and Europe arms from east to west, and north to south in order to "sfrondano il franco tricolor bastone." The whole thing is infused with a spirit of sincere horror and is presented in a way that causes the reader fully to realize and understand it. Monti wished by his manner of presentation to show that the path followed by France would not bring freedom, but only result in unnecessary bloodshed. This was much the same attitude as was held by Europe, even aside from the fact that the revolutionists were opposing the old order. For France had failed to see that lasting liberty cannot be

94. "And your good king, the greatest king, just like an innocent lamb among hungry wolves is dragged to die on the bed of thieves."

95. "E i petti invade penetrante e lieve
E le menti mortali, e fa che d'ira
Alto incendio da tutti si solleva.
Arme fremon le genti, arma cospira
L'orta e l'occaso, l'austro e l'aquillone
E tutta quanto Europa arme delira."

"And it penetrates the hearts and minds of mortals,
and sets everybody afire.

The peoples brandished their arms, the East and West,
the North and South, join in arms, all of Europe
is maddened with war."

Ibid., p.534.

96. "they tear the French tricolor from the staff."

Ibid., p.534.

acquired by raising the people to a position of tyranny over the rest of the nation. France's actions show that she did not really understand what she was seeking nor how to realize it when she found it. It was a thrust in the dark and to Monti's mind should have failed.

La Musogonia (1793) is classic both in form and content, telling of the origin of the muses and containing an imprecation against "il gallico ladrone" and an invocation to Francis II. In it, Monti speaks of Italy several times but always as a country whose head has passed under the yoke and who has up to now found no way to free herself. He presents a pitiful picture in:

"Poci è forse alla misera il tiranno
Giogo che il collo sì le curva e doma,
E incatenata il piè, carica d'affano
Indarno sospirar sotto la soma,
Se portator tu pur di strazio e danno
Il manto non le bruci e l'aurea chioma?" 97

There is little doubt that he had a real love for Italy and that he knew only too well that she should make the attempt to regain her former power. He knew what was lacking and he prays to Jove to give to them again that which had been so long lost, and he prays for her leaders:

"Deh! l'anime supreme, in cui s'affida
L'itala libertà, soccorri e guida." 98

97. "Isn't it enough for poor (Italy) to bear the tyrannical yoke that bends and subjugates her neck, and the chained foot, loaded with torment. In vain, she sighs under the burden without you bringer of torture and loss, burning her cloak and silvery hair."

Ibid., p.553.

98. "Help and guide the brave hearts to which is entrusted Italy's liberty."

Ibid., p.556.

Again, in Invito d'un solitario ad un cittadino (1792)

he mentions France:

"Quindi vedi celar tremendi e fieri
De'Druidi i nipoti, e violenti
Scuotere i regni e sgomentar le genti 99
Con l'armi e co'pensieri."

Thus he developed in the first period. Monti was definitely a friend of kings and priests and very much opposed to the form which democracy, or so called democracy, had taken. He felt that France was not only on the wrong path, but also, unless she was stopped, would lead the rest of Europe to destruction. The failure to stop her proved slightly disconcerting to him because it prevented the ending he had planned for La Bassvilliana, and poor Hugo Bassville had to remain in Purgatory instead of continuing his journey to Paradise as he should have. However, this epic which Monti was so shortly to disclaim as "una miserabile rapsodia," (a miserable rhapsody) and about which he said he had written only to hide his true state of feelings from the pontificate, is his masterpiece and is very important because it represents what was to be the feeling of most people for a good many years concerning the French Revolution. The fact that he changed his mind does not change the value of his work. The search for liberty and nationalism brought much bloodshed to Europe and this poem seems in a way to foreshadow it. At times, his attitude is extreme and some of the hatred he showers on the people and some of the praise he bestows on the King are beyond reason.

99. "When you see the offsprings of the Druids fall terrible and violent, they who shake the kingdoms and dismay the peoples with arms and with thoughts."
Ibid., p. 77

But all in all, Monti treated his subject well and succeeded in raising people to his own height of emotion.

When, in 1797, he became converted to the republican ideas, he was then "il cittadino Monti," and hastily left Rome with the French General who had brought the decree for the suppression of the temporal power of the Pope. He went to Milan, which was the center of the new movement. This change of opinion may partially be explained by the fact that the first horror of the Revolution had worn off and he, who was born to feel quickly, became carried away by the principles which these men represented. Ere long he was a friend of the generals and courtiers, and was inditing thundering odes and sonnets against superstition and fanaticism. One of his first moves was to rewrite the introduction of La Musogonia, putting Napoleon in place of il ladrone gallico and Francis II. It now became a eulogy on his great accomplishments. And he who had written La Bassvilliana then wrote an Inno (1799), to be sung at La Scala, on the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI. It opens with "il tiranno è caduto," which stands in strange contrast with his other statement of "il buon rege." 101 He continues the poem, urging France to rise and strike down her oppressors, and he says that all tyrants have fled and the servitude of the world is ended. This is just as whole heartedly against Louis as the other was for him. If it were read

100. "the tyrant is fallen"

Ibid., p. 87

101. "The good king"

See p. 34., footnote 70.

with no knowledge of the earlier poem, it would seem to have a deep sincerity which could not be surpassed. However, in all of his writing there is one note of continuity, that is, his plea for liberty. For no matter of whom or of what he speaks, he always brings liberty into the matter. In this, he said:

"Oh soave dell'alme sospiro
Libertà, che del cielo sei figlia!
Compi alfine l'antico desiro
Della terra, che tutta è per te." 102

Then Monti continued with praise of Bonaparte who had become his latest hero because he was the avenger of freedom's rights. Napoleon's only rivals are in the heavens because he has no equal on the earth. The hymn ends with a warning to the crowned heads that their time is short and already their thrones are beginning to shake and fall. The right about face is complete and all Monti's efforts for the next few years are in favor of Napoleon and the ideals for which he stood.

The complete change of policy which this represents was not accepted by many, and he received a great deal of unfavorable criticism. His defender in this case, strange as it may seem, was the young Ugo Foscolo, who wrote an Esame su le accuse contro Vincenzo Monti (1793) in which he attempted to show Monti's love of country and hatred of the Roman court. He also tried to justify his praise of Louis XVI by

102. "Oh sweet sigh of the gentle soul, Liberty, the daughter of Paradise, fulfill at last the eternal desire of the earth, all is for you."
Ibid., p.87-88.

saying that it was good and perfectly all right, only that he had exaggerated slightly, the man in him was carried away by the artist. He concluded with the argument that Italy was in very bad condition, but she would never get any better if the people persecute the truly great men of the era. Above all, there is no need to fear, for tyrants never last, and in the end truth and liberty will prevail.¹⁰³ This had its effect, but Monti has yet to live down that fact that he changed and praised the conqueror, and it is only recently that Italians have been able to overlook his failing and appreciate him for what he is.

His admiration for Bonaparte increased rapidly, and he dedicated Il Prometo (1797) "al cittadino Napoleon Bonaparte,"¹⁰⁴ and he becomes "il piu meraviglioso guerriero della storia romana."¹⁰⁵ As a matter of fact, the poem was probably begun in Rome and intended for some entirely different purpose, but as it was suitable he used it. Prometheus was the prototype of Bonaparte. The main part of the poem deals with the sorrows of humanity until the supposed return of peace into the world through the work of the young French general. From now on, there is one poem after another either dealing with Napoleon himself, a member of his family, or some event with which he was connected. There is a sonnet,

103. U. Foscolo, Opere Edite e Postume, Florence, 1923, V.17-29
104. "to the citizen Napoleon Bonaparte"

Rossi, op. cit., 111, 242.

105. "The most marvelous warrior of Roman history"
V.Monti, La Vita, in I Grandi Autori, edited by G.Lipparini.
Florence, 1931, p.190.

Per L'attentato della macchina infernale (1800), which Monti composed after an attempt on Napoleon's life. In it, God is pictured as preventing his death. Also, another written the same year was All 'Inghilterra because Monti knew that England was Napoleon's greatest enemy. He accused England of preventing the peace of the world, and, more than that, he accused her of tyranny, which seems quite strange and shows very plainly to what extremes his enthusiasms carried him. Yet another is the ode In occasione del parto della viceregina d'Italia (1807), which he composed on the birth of a daughter to the viceroy of Italy. He praises them all as usual and prophesies a marvelous future. La Ierogamia di Creta (1810) goes back again to Napoleon himself and celebrates his marriage with Marie Louise of Austria. As usual, the heavens rejoiced and all the Gods were pleased with the event. In 1811, another ode was published. This time Napoleon's son, the little King of Rome, had been born, and he received his due honor when he was addressed as
106
"Signor del mondo intero". These are only a few of what might be called his poet laureate poems, but the rest are of this same general type.

At the beginning of this same period, he wrote three songs: Il Fanatismo (1797), La superstizione (1797), and Il Pericolo (1797), which are attacks against the Papacy and the coalition of the kings. The first, which especially deals with the vatican, may be contrasted with Il Pellegrino

apostolico, and again one is compelled to wonder at the complete change. This begins with a prayer to liberty:

"Dolce dell'alme universal sospiro
Libertà, santa dea, che de'mortali
Alfin l'anticoadempì alto desiro,

Vieni ed impenna a questo canto l'ali,
Libertà bella e cara, e all'arco mio
Del vero adatta e di ragion gli strali," 107

and then continues with the tyranny of the Pontificate, with all the evils it countenances, the quarrels within the Church itself and finally prophesies that the hour of its fate was nigh and that virtue would once more be restored.

La Superstizione, if possible, is still more bitter upon the subject and even uses stronger language in describing the conditions. Monti felt that the Church had betrayed both God and man, because it had attempted to place itself before all else. So he invoked Bonaparte to come to the aid of the people and destroy the power of the Church with the sword if necessary for the altars of Christ were defiled. Also in this, Monti attempted again to justify La Bassvilliana¹⁰⁸ by saying that "pecco la lingua, ma fu casto il core";

Il Pericolo is concerned with the disturbances in Paris in the Council of Five Hundred, which was for the most part acting in opposition to Napoleon and his policies. He fears that the

107. "The universal cry of kind hearts, Liberty, holy goddess, who at last satisfies the old desire of mortals; Liberty beautiful and dear, come and feather the wings of this song and fit the arrows of truth and justice to my bow." Ibid., p.558.

108. "Sinful the language, but chaste the heart." Ibid., p.571.

"santa Libertà" will be destroyed by the city of Paris, whom he represents as a woman, and, if it is, the streets will once more run with blood. The shadow of Louis sits above the City waiting to enter it once more. In the latter part, Monti is occupied with his dread of the coalition (First Coalition) which was preparing to reconquer Italy and France. He hopes that the Italians will realize that if they turn against Napoleon they are turning against liberty and unity. If they do not, then they have the hearts of slaves and do not deserve any sympathy (Ha cuor villano, e libertà non inerta"¹⁰⁹). His very last line is quite effective when it is considered with the whole, "Chi l'amico lascio"¹¹⁰ nella catena".

The value of these is rather obvious, for the first two represent the definite anti-clerical attitude that had been growing up throughout the whole century and that was to be found wherever the Revolutionary ideas were prevalent. Monti stated his case against the Church clearly and well, but perhaps with a little too much vigor. In the last poem, he deals fairly with a rather awkward situation, and his generalizations on liberty are excellent. These types of writing made him very popular, but his chief difficulty was in retaining a popularity which demanded as security consistency.

109. "You have the heart of a slave, and liberty is dead".

Ibid., p.582.

110. "Whom the friend leaves in chains."

Ibid., p.582.

There is still another kind of political writing which he has done. There are two canzoni; the first, Per il congresso d'Udine, written and published in 1794, and the second, Il congresso cisalpino in Lione, appeared in 1801. The former treats of the peace between France and Austria at the Congress in which the Treaty of Campo-Fornio was prepared and Napoleon sold Venezia to Austria. It is one of the most noble and feeling of political lyrics and filled with a deep love for Italy. Also, Monti wrote it before he knew of the loss of Venezia. He speaks of France and Austria as holding the fate of Italy between them and he bases his hope on France. Monti then introduces a new note:

"Oh più vil che infelice! oh de'tuoi servi
Serva derisa! Si dimesso il volto
Non porteresti e i piè ferro attriti,
Se del nation vigor prostrati i nervi
Superba ignavia non t'avesse e il molto
Fornicar co'tiranni e co'leviti." 111

In this, he points out that the Italians are really a great race and the other nations are their servants. This is the first time that this thought has been so clearly expressed. It was to have a great effect during the next fifty years and Italians were to come to the point where they naturally considered themselves descendants of the Romans, who as such should try to regain some of the former power. Again he attacks the church who with its avaricious foot tramples

111. "Oh more vile than unhappy, Oh derided slave of your slaves. If you did not keep your head and your feet shackled and if your ignominious pride had not drained your nerves of their natural vigor by fornication with tyranny and with priests." Ibid., p.83.

the dead. But this is not for long because the French will take revenge:

"L'itala fortuna
Egra è sì, ma non spenta. Empio sovrasta
Il fato, e danni e tradimenti aduna:
Ma contra il fato è Bonaparte; è basta." 112

A new Prometheus has come and will infuse the Cisalpine Republic with his eternal spirit. For although Italy may die, it will not be conquered. It may fall but nature will raise it again making all equal and will give it the immortal triangle. 113 It concludes with "l'italo onor dal sonno è desto," 114 and honor is ready to prove itself by sword and vengeance. The whole poem is a call to liberation. Its greatest fault might be the dependence it expresses on France as the liberator of Italy. But that is really of small importance when it is considered as a whole. It then becomes an earnest plea for the Republic to maintain by sword, if necessary, the freedom which has so recently been acquired.

Il congresso cisalpino in Lione was composed of representatives of the so called Cisalpine nations, who met in order to approve the new constitution desired by Napoleon in order to transform the Republic into the

112. "The Italian fortune is faint but not dead. Fate is very much against her and upon her harm and betrayal. But against fate is Bonaparte and that is enough." Ibid., p.84.

113. The Masonic symbol which stands for equality, liberty, and fraternity. The organization was very strong in Italy at this period.

114. "the Italian honor is awakened from slumber." Ibid., p.86

Italian Republic. In it Monti tells them to do as Napoleon wishes, for, after all, it was he who first brought them into being and he would always do what was best. There are such expressions as "oppressa umanità", (oppressed humanity) "l'italico valor" (Italian valor) or "italo sole" (Italy alone) found throughout the whole canzone. They are definite signs of Monti's liberalism and, in a narrow way, of his nationalism. This, as does the previous one, shows too much dependence on Napoleon. However, that should merely be considered as Monti's enthusiasm of the moment and forgotten. Both canzoni have a sincere hatred of tyranny and a sincere love for Italy, which should easily compensate for their other faults.

Monti, compelled to flee from Italy in 1799 because of the fall of the Cisalpine Republic due to the victory of the Austrians, took refuge in Paris where he led the disagreeable life of an exile. However, while he was there, he completed his third tragedy, Caio Gracco (1799), the two earlier ones being Aristodemo (1786) and Galeotto Manfredi (1786), which contain very few revolutionary ideas. But Caio Gracco is powerful drama of great contrast of political passions. It is the story of the attempt of Gracchus to free the Roman people from the tyranny of patricians. There are many fine passages in it on both tyranny and freedom. Also, Monti's praises of Italy "Bella Italia" (beautiful Italy) are quite good. In some ways, it seems to resemble the Alfierian

tragedy, for both the subject matter and treatment are alike. The tragedy shows a deep love for all that is fine in a nation and emphasizes those characteristics which are essential to one.

Monti was able to return to Italy after the battle of Marengo (1800), and he celebrated his return with Bella Italia, amate sponde (1801) which is one of the most patriotic odes ever written, vibrant with deep joy at seeing once more his native land. This and one of Gabriele Rossetti's
115
on Dante served as a model of national poetry throughout the nineteenth century. It was for the many Italian exiles a perfect expression of their feelings and emotions when they entered Italy. It stands in strange contrast with most of the poetry which he wrote for the next decade. For after this he devoted himself mostly to praise of Napoleon. The opening lines of the ode are without doubt some of the best known in Italian poetry and they express a simple yet deep response to the situation, which is rather surprising to find in Monti:

"Bella Italia, amate sponde
Pur vi torno a riveder!
Trema in petto e si confonde
L'alma oppressa dal piacer.

Tua bellezza, che di pianti
Fonte amara ognor ti fu,
Di stranieri e crudi amanti
T'avea posta in servitù.

115. Gabrielle Rossetti is the father of Dante Gabriele Rossetti.

Ma bugiarda e mal sicura
La speranza fia de're:
Il giardino di natura, 116
No, pei barbari non è."

He realized all her faults and failings, yet he could still plead with her really to free herself. He could say of liberty that it is the principal and fountain of courage and of honor, the first love of the world. In this, more than anything else, he makes one feel that he was as sincere as he could be; even knowing his failings, his weaknesses does not lessen the faith that this canzonetta arouses. It is very good, and certainly it more than serves its purpose in the nationalistic development.

La Mascheroniana (1801) was written in honor of Lorenzo Mascheroni of whom he says: "Lettore, se altamente ami la patria e sei verace italiano, leggi: ma getta il libro, se per tua e nostra disavventura tu non sei che un pezza demagogo o uno scaltro mercatante di libertà." 117

116. "Beautiful Italy, land of my heart,
Do I in verity see thee once more!
Trembling confounded, my soul overwrought,
Swoons at the pleasure thou holdest in store.
For 'twas thy loveliness, that but of tears
Fountain continually proved unto thee,
Brought thee base lovers for so many years,
Holding thee fast in their vile tyranny.
Ah! but deceptive, false still,--forever,
Are the vain hopes that o'er Kings have their sway.
No: cry aloud, nature's garden can never
To the barbarians be meant for a prey."
Translated in Trail, op. cit., p.260.
Monti, op. cit., p.90.

117. "Reader, if you deeply love your fatherland and are a true Italian, read: but throw the book away, if unfortunately for you and for us you are nothing but an insane demagogue or a shrewd trafficker in liberty."
Ibid., p.583.

The plot is quite simple; he imagines the spirit of Mascheronia, flying through the sky, where he meets the spirits of other illustrious Lombards, with whom he speaks about the changes in his country. Mascheronia is held up as an example of a good patriot, enemy both of tyranny and private license. There are many excellent passages on liberty such as:

"Libertà, che alle belle alme s'apprende,
Le spedisti dal ciel, di tua divina
Luce adornata e di verginee bende." 118

Like other poets of his age, Monti also deals with humanity, brotherly love, humility, and justice. They are all discussed from the standpoint of how they affect Italy.

He quickly accepted the change from the Italian Republic to the Kingdom of Italy and accepted a post as Poet to the Court. He was now in his third period, "Cavaliere" Monti. He even was so agreeable as to compose Il Beneficio (1805) for the coronation of Napoleon. In this, he describes with splendid imagination Italy oppressed and then free, and introduced Dante to advise Italians to trust to the new ruler, Bonaparte, whom he addresses in the dedication: "Alla Maestà imperiale e reale di Napoleon I, Imperatore dei Francesi, coronado Re d'Italia (26 maggio 1805)." 119 Also, there is found in this poem one of his better known descriptions of

118. "From the Heavens you sent her liberty, which is natural to the magnanimous soul, adorned with your divine light and virginal bands."

Ibid., p.605

119. "To His Imperial and Royal Majesty, Emperor of the French, Crowned King of Italy (May 26, 1805)."

Ibid., p.290.

Italy. In a vision La Formossissima donna appears to him:

"Una donna de forme alte e divine
Per lungo attrita, e di squallore,
Sparsa l'augusto venerando crine," 120

The Bardo della Selva Nera (1806) celebrated the victory of Napoleon at Austerlitz. It has an utterly fantastic plot and on the whole is not at all good, and may be valued only for the revolutionary sentiments.

At the fall of the Kingdom of Italy in 1815, Austria was welcomed back and Monti now placed his hope for the Italian regeneration in Francis I. But nothing will explain or excuse his ungrateful vileness in Mistico omaggio (1815), Ritorno d'Austria (1810) and Invito a Pallade (1819). These are the last of his poems -- his career as a poet seemed to be finished. These are significant only for the light they throw on him as a man and not as a poet. But far more important than these was the study he made, entitled Proposta di alcune correzione e aggiunte al Vocabolario della Crusca (1817). In this he conceded first place to the Tuscan tongue as had many others before him, but he wished this not to be called Tuscan, but Italian. He was definitely seeking a lingual unity as Parini had wished, or Dante or Machiavelli. He realized full well that lingual unity would lead towards political unity. Nor was he the only one of his age who felt that the question was becoming more and more essential.

120. "A lady of beautiful and divine form, afflicted by a great sorrow and sadness, and with flowing hair."
Ibid., p.290

His value as a poet of nationalism and of liberty is somewhat clouded by his faults of weakness, vainness, and change. Yet it is true, he was always sincere. He was a representative of his nation and very close to the general spirit of this epoch. He could never be called a great interpreter of his age, but he was certainly a faithful mirror of the successive phases of his period. Carducci says more or less the same things when he notes in him the "facoltà di consentire con compiacenza alle impressioni degli avvenimenti e al genio della società fra cui passava."¹²¹ This behavior of Monti's would not actually have been such a bad thing except that the Italian people on the whole seem to demand a certain amount of stability before they are willing to give their wholehearted admiration. He never quite received this and for that reason many of his poems were not as frequently read as they would have been otherwise. In other words, his own lack of character lessens his influence, although the influence of the age should probably be considered stronger on him than on anyone else. Monti was not built of such material as Alfieri and Parini but in his fashion, he was necessary. He probably was not entirely deserving of the improvisation Manzoni put before his bust, but it is true enough to be very interesting, and, may be expresses truthfully a part of that

121. "The faculty of consenting with complacency to the impressions of the occurrences and to the genius of the society through which he was passing."
D'Ancona and Bacci, op. cit., V.59

versatile character:

"Salve, o divino, a cui largè natura
El cor di Dante e del suo duca il canto!
Questo fia il grido dell'età futura,
Ella l'età che da tua tel dice in pianto."122

Ugo Foscolo (1778-1827), the second great Revolutionary poet, was far in advance of Monti. He was born of a Greek mother and an Italian father in Zante, but he was far prouder of his Venetian descent than of his Greek nativity. Also, he was definitely a Hellenist so far as inspiration went, yet for all his Greek tradition and classical enthusiasm, he was man of his own time and both his poetry and his prose were sincerely Italian. His youth was spent in Venice and he was deeply inspired by the aspects of the ancient city. He always considered it his native home and the ignominious end of so glorious a history as the Republic's played a very great part both in his life and his writings. He is even more closely linked than Monti with the political events of the day and took a much larger part in them. He was present at the defense of Venice, and when it finally fell he departed for the Cispadine Republic. He remained in Milan and Bologna until he became filled with a desire for military glory; then he entered the army, serving partly at the siege of Genoa (1802) under Massena, and from 1804 to 1806 being in the French army with the Italian division at Valenciennes. At the end of his service, he returned to Milan, where he

122. "Greetings. O divine one, on whom nature bestowed the heart of Dante and the song of his leader (Virgil). This was the cry of the future age, but the age which was yours, you sang of in tears."
Ibid., p.52.

spent several years as a man of letters and during this period he taught for a short time at Padua. In 1811, he left Milan and lived in Florence until 1813 when he once more entered the arm of the Kingdom of Italy. Finally, after the fall of Napoleon and Italy's return again to the domination of Austria, he went into voluntary exile. He ultimately took refuge in England where he remained until his death. His writing, the prose even more than the poetry, is filled with innumerable political references: to Italy, to liberty, to war, to Napoleon. He was always concerned with the general developments and he was able to view them more fairly than most. For he was not too pliant as was Monti, nor warped against the French as was Alfieri, nor too concerned with social evils as Parini. His greatest bias was his love of Venice, which he regarded as his country, and from the extinction of the Republic he never quite recovered.

His earliest work was a tragedy, Tieste (1797), which had in it words and phrases quite Alfierian in manner. It had a definite political significance, for it spoke against tyranny and showed a full faith in French liberty. In this year, he wrote one of his most famous odes to Bonaparte Liberatore del Liber'uomo Niccolò Ugo Foscolo. He has a long letter of dedication to this hero in which he says that Napoleon has forced the Emperor to surrender, has given peace to his enemies, a constitution to Italy, and power to the people of France. But that these are not the reasons for writing the ode rather Foscolo writes "ma per mostrarti col paragone la miseria di questa Italia, che giustamente aspetta restaurata

la liberta da ci primo la fondò!"¹²³ He admitted that this ruin is Italy's own fault due to old servitude and new license. In fact, the question has really gone beyond their hands, Napoleon now holds the power and they must obey whether they will or no. But if he wishes eternal glory and fame, and he must, he can obtain them by the fashion in which he treats Italy. The letter is a strange combination of almost servility and pride. The most tragic thing about this poem was that while Foscolo was writing it, Napoleon at Campo Formio was selling Venezia to Austria. The ode itself is a plea for Italy to remember her glorious past and to regain once more her ancient virtue and liberty. It clearly shows the influence of time, from its very origin to the subjects which are treated in it. For Foscolo believes that with the aid of a Liberator, who in this case is Napoleon, Italy may regain her former rights enjoyed now by powerful tyranny. He urges the man who is to be the hero of the nation to "vien, vede, vince, e libertà redona."¹²⁴ The ode is extremely sincere and the praise it contains for the First Consul does not have the note of adulation which is so obvious in Monti. This in a way characterizes Foscolo, who, in spite of his many weaknesses and faults, had a certain strength of character which showed very clearly in all of his political opinions. He desired the freedom of Italy, but he was not willing for the sake of his own good to praise each new form as it came along, as the means by which this goal would be attained. He gave credit where credit was due and criticized all that he felt was wrong.

123. "In order to show comparison the misery of this Italy, which justly awaits the restoration of the liberty from the one who first founded it."

Foscolo, op. cit., IX, 293.

124. "Come, see, conquer, and give back liberty."

His first well known effort came in the next year when he rushed to the defense of Monti, who had just changed his opinion for the first time. Thus the young author embarked on life with the good wishes and the good opinion of the public. The Esame su le accuse contro Vincenzo Monti (1798) more or less succeeds in justifying his actions and it did have much effect in quelling the controversy. The reasoning in it is logical and clear and the remarks Foscolo makes concerning Italy are more than true. He tells her that she demands and pleads for freedom and then when someone attempts to show her the way, she criticizes because it was not done in just the way she would have liked. Then he continues, saying that there are always tyrants; every newborn republic has its Cromwell and they are necessary if there is to be real liberty and not anarchy. It ends with this very cutting remark: "Forse agli Italiani futuri si spetta
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di riparare l'otraggio da noi fatto alla libertà."

In this same year, one of his best known and perhaps the most celebrated of his productions was written, Jacopo Ortis (1803). It was the first cry of disillusionment. He had begun by singing with lyrical enthusiasm of the un hoped for liberty, but while he was singing of his hero, he turned traitor and Foscolo became a homeless wanderer, without a country, family or illusions. So from the depths of his heart, he produced his Jacopo Ortis. In the death of his hero he found his own death, and suicide seemed the only solution. Progress is still in its

125. "Perhaps it remains to the future Italians to repair the outrage we have done to liberty."
Ibid., V. 29

youth for with the first success came mad dreams and with the first disillusion came black despair. This sudden jump from one extreme to another shows better than anything else how little founded on real experience was the new movement in Italy. It had come suddenly when it was not really expected. The Italians had welcomed it and changed their entire mode of thinking in order to include it. Then, just as quickly, it was destroyed and they had nothing, for their ideas had been purely theoretical and there was no real knowledge to back them at the critical moment. The letters themselves are reminiscent of Goethe's Werther and are a forerunner of Chateaubriand's René. But they are not so narrow, for added to the purely personal sorrows of these tragic autobiographies is the nobler motive of despair at the ruin and enslavement of the hero's country. Brutal reality had profaned his ideal, and Foscolo was convinced that the noble concept of country, liberty, justice and virtue in which he had his faith were only fantasies and illusions. Then combined with this was his hopeless love affair. The result was suicide. Thus goes the plot. The melancholy pleased the morbid sensibilities of the era and the pages filled with vigorous love of country, although pleasing to his contemporaries, were dearer to the Italians in the period of national redemption. So it may be seen that it was a very important book, not only to his own period but as an influence to those who were to follow. He asks, "Ov'è l'antico terrore della tua gloria? Miseri! noi andiamo ogni dì memoranda la libertà a la gloria degli

avi, le quali quanto più splendono tanto più scorrono la nostra abbietta schiavitù. Mentre invociamo quelle ombre magnanime, i nostre nemici colpestano i loro sepolcri.¹²⁶"

So it may be seen that it was a very important book not only to his own period but as an influence to those who were to follow. Leopardi is especially a victim of this and carried the pessimism to extremes. However, the cry of despair which this volume represented was soon drowned out by the noise of events. New hopes had arisen once more and with them new illusions. The work, although it did cause some stir, was not regarded seriously for long. The whole truth of the matter was that it was out of harmony with the times, with public opinion. He was expressing an attitude which seemed to have no real basis, and, besides this, Jacopo was contradictory to the new hopes which everyone was finding and clinging to with all their strength.

Ugo Foscolo had taken his place in Italian life and was proud of his new country. He was writing articles for the Monitore Italiano on the political events of the day. He dealt with such topics as were discussed in the Legislature, giving his own opinions on what should be done. As, for instance, he urged it as one of the chief duties of the State to aid the poor so that they might be really free. He also stressed the then present evils of the Republic, such as the omnipotence of the priests, the ambitions of the nobility, the avariciousness of the ministry and the misery of the people. All of which lead him to believe that Plutarch was right when he said: "Riches and poverty are the most ancient

126. Foscolo, op. cit., I, 123.

and mortal weaknesses of the Republic." Then in another article he tried to show the value of having a good army by showing the impossibility of buying protection. He believed that it was up to the Legislature to save the people from ruin and slavery. Yet, when the Cisalpine Republic was attacked, he always rose to its defense because he believed that those who led these attacks were talking against liberty. In all of the articles, he showed much common sense, as well as a very sincere desire for the experiment to be a success.

He did not confine his writing just to newspaper work, for in that same period his Discorso su L'Italia (1798) appeared. It was addressed to General Championnet to whom he wished to tell certain things which would be both useful to him as a man and to their country. The gist of his argument is that France cannot continue to fight without the aid of Italy so it is necessary that Italy should bargain for her independence by saying she will help France only if she may attain freedom. The General need have no hesitation for he will have the support of all the people. If France will not agree, then the General may continue without her, for after all Italy is strong enough alone. Foscolo concludes with a very telling sentence, saying history will record: "Il popolo francese condanna Championnet per avere sconfitto un nemico onnipotente, pacificata la Francia, e liberata L'Italia,"¹²⁷ if Championnet carries out this plan as presented. This is a very interesting piece of work, for it is the first time that a definite plan for the freeing and unifying of even a section of the Peninsula has been

127. Foscolo, op. cit., V, 34

promulgated in literature since Machiavelli. Others have wished for unity, for liberty, but they have not had any exact plan. Of course, it must be granted that Foscolo was favored by circumstances. But even then it is very unusual to find such a suggestion as this of what before had only been thought. It is a great forward step, and from this time on, the nationalistic tendencies become more and more obvious.

He again comes to the aid of Italy in Orazione a Bonaparte pel congresso di Lione (1802). Granted, he praises Napoleon, but he does not stop there, for he goes on to inquire why the Consul permitted Italy to be ravaged as it was by the French army. He then deals with other contemporary events with which Napoleon was connected, praising or blaming as seemed right. Until Napoleon's appearance, Italy had seemed abandoned by all, but now history may say, the fates seemed against Italy, but Napoleon was against the fates; he annihilated an old republic, but another, greater and more free, was founded because he had not only improved the political side, but also the economic and social. There is much he could do and Foscolo attempts to convince by a little flattery. He could make another great epoch, will he? He had intended to deliver this oration, but did not. It contains, as one can be sure, much the same ideas as he had expressed before. After all, one of the greatest points in his favor is his consistency in opinions, and this work although pompous --- artificial in style, has some bold and serious ideas, which, if followed, would have prevented much of Italy's difficulty.

However, the work which raises him to the level of

the great was Dei Sepolcri (1807) -- he was known hereafter simply as the author of the Sepolcri. And certainly this ode was the first lyrical voice of the new literature, the affirmation of the new consciousness, the birth of the new man.¹²⁸

In this poem, the sublimity of the natural and savage work of death is changed by the finest and most delicate sentiments of humanity into a living pantheon. Foscolo realized the aims and progress of humanity, but also he saw it linked with family, with country, with liberty, with glory. Death continues to influence the living through the vital force of love. The Revolution, in spite of its horrors and bloodshed, was continuing the work of progress and men were becoming more temperate in their desires. So, despite the general anti-clerical and anti-religious attitude, there was an earnest seeking for religion on the part of many and Foscolo attempted to answer this and to justify himself as a patriot. The results are more or less satisfactory, so far as the religious side is concerned. It is deeply patriotic and Foscolo refers to past glories, Machiavelli, Dante, Galileo, and bemoans the fact that Italy does not cherish her great dead for:

"A egregie cose il forte animo accendono
L'urne de' forti, o Pindemonte; e bella
E santa fanno al peregrin la terra
Che le ricetta." 129

He follows this thought by one even more pessimistic because he blames the greed of France for destroying the most of Italy's tem-

128. DeSanctis, op.cit., II, 906.

129. "The urns that hold the great inflame strong minds
To mighty deed, O Pindemonte; lands
Which cherish such become holy, sublime
To pilgrims."
Translated in Trail, op.cit., p.275
Foscolo, op.cit., IX, 181.

poral power and of robbing her of her wealth and altars; all, save memory, is lost (*tranne la memoria, tutto.*) and she should be thankful that it is impossible to destroy it. In the first part of Sepolcri the elegiac note prevails. He speaks of Parini and his forgotten grave. The second part, which exalts the civil efficacy of the tomb, is nearly epic in qualities in the pictures it gives, and in the idea it suggests of reaching universality and eternity through sorrow. He is, even in his masterpiece, the poet of the new era. The things which will affect the political side are always foremost in his mind. By this statement it is not to be understood that it is in any way, shape or form, a fault. For it is the very fluidity of Dei Sepolcri which gives a delicacy and a greatness that would not have been possible otherwise. He deals with the universal, yet he has enriched it with the particulars which made up his individual line of thought. Thus, his becomes a poem representative not only of his own era, but also of all eras. He states with justice the whole truth in such a way that it will become an integral part of the national consciousness.

In Dell'Origine e Dell'Uffizio della Letteratura (1809) again he made this same appeal to the youth of Italy to remember their past glory and to try to regain it. This was an inaugural oration at the University of Padua. He bases his plea on the fact that no other people have had more calamity over which to weep, more error from which to escape, more courage with which to make them respected, or greater souls which are worthy of being free. He takes oratory by which to prove these points. but says that the whole field of history is full of other ex-

amples. He believes that all virtues and faults may be learned from literature, and that it should be the duty of all to see that the Palladium of the "patria letteratura" is kept inviolate since so much depends upon it. -It is futile to have a few who know that wrong is being done but who do not dare to attempt to save the country from the ignorant and the vile. He advises them to ask of Dante, Machiavelli and Tasso how they preserved this love of country, of glory and of truth so that his age might in turn benefit by it. He concludes with a plea that he might give some of these things to letters and to Italy. Little did he realize how much he did give them, even though he was only dealing with the same ideas which had been fermenting in the state for the past fifty years. He expressed them in a new form and to a new group, and also his own works seemed to further the ideas and give them more weight; by that is meant that he showed the influence of the illustrious past in his classical tendencies, and he showed his love of country and of liberty both in his prose and poetry.

This same interest can be seen by his Discorso su Testo del poema di Dante (1825) which although written much later, shows just as clearly his unflagging interest in all things concerning his country. In the preface, he speaks of Dante as the "che mi è maestro non solo di lingua e poesia, ma di amore di patria senza adularla; di fortezza nell' esiglio perpetuo; di longanimità nelle imprese, e di disprezzo alla plebe letteraria, patrizia, e sacerdotale, della quale il

genere umano ebbe ed ha ed avrà sempre necessità."¹³⁰ The reasons as given here for his love of Dante can serve as his criterion for any man. All of which makes his interest in Monti still stranger. For Foscolo, who admired all who remained firm in their convictions no matter what might occur, to be interested in such a type, much less defend him, was extremely queer.

Soon after La Prolusione, he began definitely to turn against Napoleon, and actual signs of this are seen in his second tragedy, Aiace (1811) which, due to the political and anti-Napoleonic allusions, caused him to leave Milan and retire to Florence. It, too, has the Alfierian touch, as does his last, La Ricchiarda (1813). However, they neither one are very important except as showing that he was consistently following the path down which had started in his youth.

In 1814, another of his more famous works appeared. It was Della servitù dell' Italia, which he wrote after the ruin of the Kingdom of Italy, because he believed that no other nation would give a fair account of the matter. He blames the Senators for most of the difficulties, but they must not lose heart.

He, himself, would rather go into exile than stay in Italy, which makes a rather strange contradiction unless one stops and considers that one point of view must represent a whole country and the other is merely that of a very depressed individual. The First Discourse is a general consideration of the parties, factions, and sects in Italy. The result of his inquiry

¹³⁰. "Who to me is master not only of language and poetry, but of love of country without adulation, of strength in perpetual exile, of patience in undertaking and of scorn for the literary patrician and the priestly mob of which the human race has had, and has, and will have always need."
Foscolo, op. cit., III, 97.

is that Foscolo says it will be absolutely necessary to disband all sects before Italy may be remade; for unless every one is in agreement nothing will result except chaos. The reason the Italians do not succeed is because -- "che, mente quasi tutti aspiriamo alla Indipendenza, cospiramo pur tutti all Schiavitù."¹³¹ He takes the parties of the French Revolution as an example of the evils they can bring and how they can completely destroy the public liberty. A consideration of the conditions in the Kingdom of Italy is the title of the Second Discourse. Here again, he touches on the failure of the Senate to make an adequate attempt to protect the country. The only way for the Peninsula to be safe would be for it to reach the Alps, its natural barrier; and the best way to do this would be for the whole country to unite all sects into the principal classes of people. Their chief difficulty is that they desire liberty but have no knowledge of how to obtain it. He concludes with a very fiery bit of advice to the Senators, concerning the Italian honor which he believes they are about to compromise. The nation has lost all Independence, Glory, hope and prosperity -- there remains only honor. So, why should the Senate take away that which is able to give the only consolation to the country? The Third Discourse is especially interesting because it deals with the opinions of diplomats, philosophers, and politicians about the question of Italian independence. The opinion of the first group was that Italy either should take action or else stop talking about it; that of the

131. "That while we almost all aspire to Independence, we all conspire for slavery."
Ibid., V, 186

second group was that they should be free because servitude never results in prosperity. The opinions of the last group is rather vague, the trouble being, in their opinion, a lack of law and a lack of power.

These four discussions are excellent, because they not only have practical suggestions to make, but they, on the whole, treat the subject with a great deal of fairness. Of course, it is perfectly obvious that his desire is freedom from all foreign domination with a semi-unity, but this was not generally the tonic in hand. Foscolo and his contemporaries were just beginning to grow away from the abstract ideas which the Revolution had popularized: liberty, fraternity and equality. The question was growing slowly towards the point where practical statesmen could take it in charge and get, as the result, the Italy of 1870.

These discourses were the last thing he wrote before he went into exile, and by this act he gave Italy a new institution. He had labored all his life for Italian independence, and when he finally saw that the last hope was gone, he left Italy and stayed in Zurich for a while, until he was finally forced to leave because Austria brought pressure to bear on the police. He tells of the episode in his letter to the Direttore della polizia generale (1816). He attempted to defend himself by telling of his connection with the Revolution. He begins: "La mia professione letteraria e politica, nè io ho mai disgiunto l'una dall'altra,

comincia dall'anno 1796, quand 'io uscito appena di
fauciullo (nacqui nel '78) scrissi il Tieste tragedia:" 132
and continues with the rest of his life. However, his
letter had no effect, and so he departed for England,
where he remained until his death.

There he did a great deal of writing, mostly
prose. Among his works are to be found, Frammenti di
Storia del regno Italico which contains some very intelli-
gent remarks on the Revolution. There is also a very bit-
ter passage on Napoleon who, Foscolo says, made the conquest
of Italy by false means; proclaimed that he was bringing
liberty and it turned out to be tyranny. The same thing
is true of Austria, she regained her foothold in 1814
by promises of a liberal government, but she made no
attempt to carry out the promise. Then, too, he touches
on religion, which is no longer an aid to the state
because it has a matter of external appearance only. He
is always the liberal, the patriot who hopes for what
seems to him the impossible.

The Narrazione delle fortune e delle cessioni
di Parga (1824) is important chiefly because he under-
takes to defend Parga against Great Britain or rather to
prove that England had mistreated this small island. He
succeeded rather well both in the defense of the island

132. "I have never separated my literary and political
career, one from the other. It began in 1796 when
I, scarcely more than a child (born in '78) wrote
the tragedy Tieste." Ibid., V.269.

and the defense of himself (he had been accused of writing an article on Parga which slandered the government). He says of himself "Mon but ~~est~~ ¹³³ été celui d'un homme qui aime son pays, et mes moyens ont toujours été de nature à être avoués à tout le monde." In the essay are several good discussions of justice and the faults with the then present method of defining it.

A valuable piece of work, so far as information goes, is the Lettera Apologetica, which is in the nature of an autobiography of political subjects. It was found unfinished in London after his death, a vigorous and triumphant defense of his political and moral conduct. It opens with the discussion of the horrors of slavery, and then tells how much worse slavery is where the race possesses superior mind, better heaven, ancient glory and skill in literature; yet they must live, breathe, and have their being, due to the kindness of foreigners. Another extremely interesting point which he makes is that many desire unity and independence for their own provinces and not for the whole of Italy. Also,

133 My goal has been that of a man who loves and my means have always been of a nature to be confessed before all the world.

Ibid., V. 295.

the memory of former independence of Italy is to be found in literature, for Italians have profound and tenacious illusions. Yet their efforts to attain it now are futile or else they remain content with what they have. Finally, he speaks of Parini and Alfieri, who preceded him in attempting reform. The letter covers everything in which he is interested. Liberty and independence are yet again discussed from all angles. Napoleon, too, has his share of attention. In fact, he missed nothing about which there was the slightest interest in the period. His justification of his own actions and writings are interesting and on the whole sound quite reasonable.

Aside from these more important writings of Foscolo, there are quite a few of no great value, yet which show definite signs of the influence of the period. There are such things as Su L'origine e i limiti della Giustizia (1809), which is a typical subject of the era: or Intorno alle scope di Gregoria VII (1811), which is only important for the views it expresses on the Church. This next one, Della vita e delle opere di Niccolò Machiavelli (1811), is much more valuable because it gives Foscolo's opinions of the former's idea of Italy and liberty. One of the last, but certainly not the least, of this group is "Discorso Sesto" from Sulla Lingua Italiana. Foscolo has attempted to convince the people that they desire unity and purity of style, and he ends with this attitude: "Non però cessavano le vergognosissime liti intorno al nome della lingua. Durano

tuttavia con quelle animosità provinciali, che sino dalle età barbare hanno conteso a quel popolo sciagurato di riunirsi in nazione; e le animosità sono esacerbate insieme e santificate da quegli uomini letterati, i quali negano all 'Italia fui 'anche il diritto di possedere una lingua comune a tutte le sue città." ¹³⁴

His efforts were not in vain and his line of argument suited the general trend.

His Epistolarie, which is among the most important and sincere in the Italian literature, shows great vigor of character and capacity for great virtue. They are very interesting to read and throughout them all there are expressions of patriotisms, as how very bitter and sad it made him feel to leave Italy in 1816. He makes such statements as he is willing to sacrifice his own independence to that of his country, but it seems to do no good for tyranny always has the upper hand. He wishes to see Italy independent and is constantly urging her to take up arms, for he doesn't believe that she deserves such a situation as is hers.

Besides the letters, there are a few additional poems which are interesting. The most important is Le Grazie (1809) which is valuable for the lessons of high morality that it inculcates. A sonnet which is quite good is "All 'Italia (1798)

134. "But the very shameful quarrels about the name of the Language did not cease. They still persist in that regional animosity that since primitive days has kept that unfortunate people from uniting in one nation and the animosities are exaggerated and sanctified by those literary men who deny Italy the right to possess a language common to all its cities."
Ibid., IV, 260.

which was written when Cisalpine Republic proposed the abolition of the Latin language. He defends the language strongly, and hopes that this action will not be carried out. It has a lively enthusiasm for the unification of Italy and for the realization of the value of her past glory. Then, also, Il Mio Tempo (1796) and Ai Novelli Repubblicani (1792) are early poems which show how he felt concerning the events of the day. Foscolo wrote several things about Venice, one a sonnet, a Venezia (1796), and then much later he wrote a prose dissertation on the founding and development of the Venetian Republic.

Thus he wrote and lived, completely engrossed in the affairs of the period, yet he had enough of the spirit of a true artist to surpass these limitations. He saw this new movement of nationalism as a thing which would bring liberty and freedom to the nations, and they in turn, through the having of it, would be better and more complete. It is his singular merit to remain more than loved, adored by the Italian youth of the generation following his, and to have through example and through his writings excited their minds and their hearts to the thoughts and to the love of political independence. He, more clearly and precisely, than his predecessors, told the Italian people that which they were seeking. He gave definite expression to the subconscious wish of the people. He came down from abstractions, while still embodying in his work the philanthropic and emancipatory ideas of France, and the general conception

of love, of liberty, and Italy, of Alfieri, who had so glorified the patria. He applied his patriotism and nationalism to actual facts and the result was a tremendous influence over his own contemporaries and the people of the Risorgimento. For, he represented, as did Monti, the agitations, the uncertainties, and the failings of his generation. He seemed a personification of all their thoughts. Foscolo, very certainly, opened the way to the new century, and there is little doubt that, if progress had taken a more logical path than that of the precipitous one that it did, the last writer of the eighteenth century would have been the first of the nineteenth century. But it didn't, and his classicism seemed as if it were a denial of progress. Of course, it is true that, later in life, he modified his opinions better to suit the new century. Even
135.
then he was the end. His thought follows the spirit of the age, but the form was classical and the next period was to be known as "romantic". Nevertheless, his true value must not be lost and his comment on Alfieri might well be applied to him: "Incitò gl'italiani cercare per il risorgi-
136
mento."

In point of time, Manzoni should next be treated, but since the scope of his work is so wide and continues so much farther into the nineteenth century than does Leopardi's,

135. DeSanctis, op.cit., II, 909-910

136. "He, incited the Italians to seek the risorgimento."
I. Sanesi, "Foscolo", Encyclopedia Italiana, Milan, 1929, XV, 764.

It is more logical to postpone his treatment. Both men are classified as romanticists, the former reflecting the return to the middle ages and its Christianity, while the latter represents the pessimistic attitude, the mal du siècle. Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1834) had one of the most tragic, yet uneventful lives that have ever been recorded. It was little else than ardent cultivation of the spirit and constant struggle with the infirmities of the body. Added to the latter was the constant quarreling with his father, a learned but unfortunately bigoted and retrograde Italian nobleman, of anti-national and antiquarian tastes, over the new political ideas which he had imbibed from his correspondence with Pietro Giordani. This was extremely unfortunate, since due to his poor health, he could follow no profession and was entirely dependent on his family for support. He, however, made temporary escapes from home and was to be found successively at Rome, Bologna, Florence, and, finally, at Naples where he died.

He was of an essentially philosophical temperament and was never able to cope with practical life. He carried in his heart all the agony of his time. He felt himself oppressed, shackled, gagged, choked, and nearly suffocating. This was the feeling of most of the Italian people of those years. It is small wonder that he thought there was no hope of obtaining liberty. He never learned how to suit himself to conditions, and the result was the development of

a very negative philosophy, a belief that a strong and high soul might resist even necessity, but is not able to resist the time. Thus he accounts for all in those few words. Yet his attitude was a perfectly natural development, for just as Foscolo had gone through a period of deep depression when he saw his dreams ended, so Leopardi's whole life was a broken dream. He was early disillusioned, and, so far as he could see, humanity was a poor thing at best and Italy was merely the stage for the presentation of all the evils which may possess a state. His own sufferings enabled him to represent in his person the unhappy Italy of his day. He seemed the living symbol of his country, a country which was naturally favoured beyond all others and was now racked and tormented by tyrants. There is no doubt that he realized the former greatness, but he was unable to foresee the future. Instead, there was only darkness filled with the crying of lost hope. So, nationalism in his case is very different. He would like to prophesy a united Italy, but circumstances are such that he is forced to speak mainly of the past.

The first time that he stepped forward as a champion of Italy was at the age of fourteen when he wrote that the thought of the French language as superior to the Italian should be an intolerable one to every patriot, for not only has it more smoothness and precision, but also, a superior grace. So it is clear that very early, he became interested

in Italy as a whole and was desirous of its fame. His next direct comment concerning the country came in 1815 after the defeat of Murat. Leopardi composed an Orazione in order to exhort the Italians to remain contented with the prosperous peace offered by the legitimate sovereigns, and to reject the deceitful illusions of liberty and unity. A psychological crisis, which followed shortly after this and transformed little by little the whole being of the youth, had awakened in the reactionary orator the beginnings of love for the great Italian patria, and of indignation for its present miseries.

His first actual expression of this new attitude comes in his first two canzoni, All'Italia and Sopra il monumento di Dante che si prepara in Firenze (1818-dedicated to Vincenzo Monti). They are concerned with the decadence and the then present ignorance of the country in contrast with the glory and the virtue of their ancestors. Earlier in the same year, he had written in his notebook this concerning Italy: "O patria, o patria mia, che farò? non posso spargere il sangue per te che non esisti più.....Che farò di grande? Come piacerò a te! In che opera perchi, per qual patria, spanderò e sudori, e dolori, il sangue mio?"¹³⁷

This carries, as usual, his despairing cry which is even more noticeable in All'Italia which is supposedly written on

137. "Oh fatherland, O my fatherland, what shall I do? I am not able to shed my blood for you who are no longer... What great deed can I do? How can I please you! In what deed to what fatherland can I devote the efforts, my sorrows, my blood"
Leopardi, op.cit., p. 281.

on the present state of Italy. It opens with a general address to the country, and then passes rapidly on to tell of the Italians who were with Napoleon in Russia. The second part begins like the first, and is concluded with the story of the Greeks at Thermopylae. It contains many references to the past, which is always in his mind. The invocation begins:

"O mia patria, vedo le mura e gli archi
E le colonne e i simulacri e l'erme
Torri degli avi nostri,
Ma la gloria non vedo,
Non vedo il lauro e il ferro ond'eran carichi
I nostri padri antichi."¹³⁸

From here he proceeds to describe the present Italy as being enchained. He asks why she is unable to regain her ancient strength, her arms, and valor. Has she fallen so low that no one will fight for her? Where are her sons? To this last question, a most pathetic answer comes that they have fallen fighting for another country instead of giving their life to the "alma terra natia." (Beautiful native Land) So he takes refuge in the story of the Persian invasion and the behaviour of the Athenians, dying so willingly for their country, and it is presented in contrast with that of the Italians. Their tombs are altars, and he will prostrate himself before them and sing their praise from pole to pole. He goes back to Italy in the conclusion, saying, "Tanto durar quanto la
139
vostra duri." He is unable to see any good for the

138. O my fatherland I see the walls and the arches and the columns and the statues and the ermes, monuments of our ancestors. But the glory I do not see. I do not see the laurel and the sword which our forefathers possessed.
Ibid., p. 161.
139 "As long as your (fame) will last."
Ibid., p. 164.

future and his hopes are annihilated by his pessimism. Yet his very despair was something, for it showed that even though he had no hopes, he was conscious of the faults and evils. If these latter are known and talked about, sooner or later some good will come of them.

The second poem on Dante is also about Italy, and is a tribute from an Italian to the "gran padre Alighieri" who will never be forgotten. He repeats more or less the same type of sentiment as appeared in the first, except that there are several bitter passages about France, such as "L'itala moglie a barbaro soldato." ¹⁴⁰ He feels that there is little to hope for his poor country. Nevertheless, he is willing to die for Italy, but not for tyranny:

"Ahi non il sangue nostro e non la vita
Avesti, o cara; e morte
Io non son per la tua cruda fortuna.
Qui l'ira al cor, qui la pietade abbonda:
Pugnò, cadde gran parte anche id noi:
Ma per la moribonda
Italia no; per li tiranni suoi." ¹⁴¹

¹⁴² After these were published and had passed the censors, he wrote the dedicatory letter to Vincenzo Monti, who he believed was most deserving of it, because of the love he bore for poor Italy, also, because he had been in-

140. "Italy married to a barbarian soldier."

Ibid., p. 167.

141. "Dear one, we did not give you our blood and our life, nor did we lay down our lives for your cruel fate. Here rancor and pity abound and a great part of us fought and fell but not for dying Italy but for its tyrants."
Ibid. p. 188.

142. By 1818 censorship had become very strict throughout Italy.

fluenced by him. Such sentiments as he expressed in these may appear slightly oratorical but they acted as flames to the hearts devoted to the country in the days of the national redemption. It is rather strange that his hopelessness should have the same effect in the long run as the optimistic sentiments expressed by Foscolo, but it acted in its way as a stimulus to the country, and he came to be regarded as one of Italy's foremost patriots.

In the Discorso de cui italiano intorno alla poesia romantica (1818), he returns to his subject and begs the youth of Italy to come to her aid, for he does not believe that any other nation should help. Succor her, he pleads, who was once mistress of the world, formidable both on land and sea, judge of the people, arbiter of both peace and war, for now all has fallen, all is lost. Do so for the memory and the fame and the eternal past; do not let your hand be guilty of her end. There is also a long tirade against France for having taken Italy's artistic patrimony, evidently Alfierian in inspiration. After this, he speaks again and as always to the young Italians telling them that they must realize their duty and have pity on their beautiful country by coming to the aid of it.

However, his thinking does not stop with these, for in Ad Angelo Mai (1820), which was written when Mai found the books of Cicero's Republic, he records the evils of Italy. He had a little difficulty with it because the censors did not like the liberal maxims promulgated with such eloquence, and the Austrian censor said: 'This poem smacks of the spirit of liberalism, which appears to have infected this

unhappy region of our country. He certainly was correct. As Leopardi reviews the great men of Italy, he tells what he wishes for her. In conclusion, he asks Angelo to revive the dead in order that

".....: tanto che in fine
Questo secol di fango o vita agogni
E sorga ad atti illustri, o si vergogni."144

The only modern whom he will permit in his gallery of fame is Alfieri, who as a free spirit did not belong in his age; rather he should have lived at the time of the Roman Republic. He is trying to tell Italy what is wrong, but instead of doing that, he frequently eulogizes the past glory, and his hopes for the future fade away. But there is no doubt that he was definitely interested in Italy and he did make suggestions as to how she might accomplish her end. Nelle Nozze della Sorella Paolina (1822) may be included in this. For in it he exhorts the women of Italy, using Sparta and Rome as examples, to reawaken the national valor, the holy flame of youth. Italy only grows more miserable as she has unhappy families, and, until the day comes when the mothers realize the part they must play, the country will wait. This is interesting, for it is the first time that a definite appeal has been made to women alone. It is true, of course, that Parini sought to improve the home life and improve the moral standards

143. Ibid., p.321.

144. "So much that at last this century of shame either
aspires to life and raises to illustrious deeds
or falls to shame.
Ibid., p.175.

of both sexes, but his appeals were only here and there, and not addressed particularly to women. Leopardi makes his point and then, as usual, exemplifies it with a classical reference. The subject is from Alfieri, the form from Foscolo, but in the combination it becomes purely Leopardi.

The fifth of his six patriotic songs is A Un vincitore nel pallone (1821), the purpose of which is to teach the youths to love games of contest and to stimulate them to undertake glorious enterprises. For he believed that the safeguard of the liberty of a nation was not the philosophy nor the reason, but the courage, the illusions, and the enthusiasm; in brief, the things of nature from which they were far away. Their regeneration depended solely upon those, so to speak, who were beyond philosophy and were in entire complete accord with nature. Through games, a love of glory, which is a passion suitable to men in society and perfectly natural, will be awakened and the youth will feel the urge to distinguish itself in other ways and thus true valor will appear. Also, it is necessary to have a strong body and exercise will bring it. But the strongest part of the poem is the lines where Leopardi says:

"Tempo forse verrà ch'alle ruine
Delle italiche moli
Insultino gli armenti, e che l'aratro
Sentano i sette colli; e pochi Soli
Forse fien volti, e le città latine
Abiterà la cauta volpe, e l'atro
Bosco mormorerà fra le alte mura;
Se la funesta delle patrie cose
Obblivion dalle perverse menti
Non isgombrano i fati, e la matura

Clade non torce dalle abbiette genti
Il ciel fatto cortese
Dal rimembrar delle passate imprese." 145

This is really not at all strange, for it must be remembered that he really held no hope in life except that of death.

The last of the patriotic group is Bruto Minore (1821) which is especially interesting because the poem deals not so much with the courage of Brutus as with the rights of man to take his own life. Naturally, Leopardi proves that it is perfectly justifiable, and Brutus himself is really a martyr to liberty; the very fact that he is willing to leave this world when he sees that all things upon which he based his life are destroyed, proved that there are certain beliefs, such as liberty, which are life itself. In several places, as letters and notes, Leopardi had discussed the idea of suicide, and in all he justifies it. In a way it seems stretching the point a bit to call this a patriotic canzonì, and in the most obvious sense of the word it is not. Yet the situation of Brutus and the situation of Leopardi are not so different, if one assumes the likeness only on the mental side; thus by a rather roundabout way, it becomes patriotic inasmuch as it is dealing with the rights a man has in his own country. So Leopardi says if one's country fails one, suicide is right and

145. "The time will perhaps come when they will apply their implements to the Italian ruins; and that the seven hills will feel the plow, and ere many days pass when the cautious fox will inhabit the Latin cities and the dark woods will murmur within the high walls. If the fates will not clear the way for patriotic deeds, and Heaven, softened by remembering your past deeds, will not lead these abject people to massacre."
Ibid., p.179.

even desirable. In the long run it really amounts to a more bitter expression of its own pessimism.

These six poems form an interesting group and together they give rather completely his own ideas on state and on man. They show by their subject matter his classical and romantic sides. They make an interesting contemporary comment on Italy, but, above all, they show the gain nationalism had made since the opening of the century. There are many more references to Italy as a whole; the attitude toward liberty has become more sincere and not quite so rhetorical, and the hatred of tyranny, while just as bitter, is more of an accepted fact. The poets are working towards the point of a national state, but they are doing that which Mazzini believed it was necessary to do - "To make Italians before Italy could be made."

Nevertheless, the influence of the era does not stop with these, for in La Ginestra (1836) the story of a man who is more than conscious of his impotence and littleness, denying all spiritual valor, invoking against impious nature the lover and fraternity of man. There is the Ultimo Canto di Saffo (1822), which is a lugubrious denial of the value of virtue and the Inno ai Patriarchi (1822), which deals with the past, when man fed on sweet dreams which the civilization, science, and reason have destroyed:

".....Oh contra il nostro
Scellerato ardimento incermi fegni
Della saggia natura! 146

146. "O against our wicked boldness the unarmed signs of wise nature.
Ibid., 189.

Certainly the Palinodia (1834) which is a satire, should be included. In this he made fun of his contemporaries, who fought and hoped for betterment and reform in both the social and political order.

"O cagion qual si sia ch' ad auro torni,
Valor vero e virtù, modestia e fede
E di giustizia amor, sempre in qualunque
Pubblico stato, alieni in tutto e lungi
Da comuni negozi." 147

It was extremely successful, and his point was well taken because so much of the reform attempted during this era was of an utterly worthless type. Another satire, the Paralepomeni della Batracomiomache (1834-37), is an even better example. It is a fantastic continuation of a poem attributed to Homer, and the action is transported to the years 1815-1821, and represents the contest between the Austrian rulers and the liberal Italians. Leopardi scoffs at them both because the former fail, due to bad will, and the latter due to ineptitude. There are many digressions about the institutions of the country and the political and economic conditions of the time. The chief difficulty with it is the obscurity of some of the allusions, which lessens its political value a great deal. The real point of the satire in his eyes was to show how hopeless was the Risorgimento, which he so ardently desired, and that it was not possible without a profound regeneration of the Italian character.

147. "O cause, which ever it may be, that changes true valor and courage, modesty, and faith, and love of justice, into gold in all public places and things that are not common business.
Ibid., p.251.

In the poem, the Italian destiny is fantastically altered and camouflaged and culture and science are frankly caricatured. There are not lacking stupendous descriptions, genial inventions and rushing lyricism which show that the soul of Leopardi is always warm with love for the most noble ideals of life.

Among Leopardi's prose works is the Operette morali (1827), which consists of twenty-two essays. The most famous of them is Parini ovvero della gloria and Detti memorabili di Filippo Ottonicoi. In most of them, he touches on the misery of mankind and the futility of the struggle against nature. They are not specifically influenced by the political developments, but they bear the mark of them, inasmuch as the condition of the country affected his own nature and increased his feeling of hopelessness.

I Pensieri is a consideration of the nature of man and their means of living in society. The feeling which inspires them is the same as that of the Operette Morali. Lo Zibaldone (1817-1832) is more important, because it contained discussions of all kinds; brief notes and lengthy dissertations on philosophy, literature and politics. It could never be considered a work of art, but certainly it is one of the best possible guides to his opinion on any and every matter.

On the whole, Leopardi's writing was quite negative, due to his lack of hope and of faith. Yet if his works are examined at all carefully, it can be seen that he represents a different and still more advanced stage of what might be called Revolutionary thought. He spoke unfavorably of Italy and of most of their efforts,, yet he could still write:

"... Ci avrebbe fatti schiavi della Francia. Gran Dio! Quella nazione sleale che ha perduto omai ogni diritto alla stima di Europa, potrebbe mai tornare ad esercitare il suo tirannico imperio sopra il più bel paese della terra? No, Francesi. Noi meritiamo altri destini. Una nazione sì nobile non avrà più l'onta di esservi suddita. Un milione di armati ce ne assicura. Ma l'Italia per colpa della Francia ha già perduta una parte del suo splendore..... L'Italia gettò un grido di lamento quando vide le sue contrade spogliarsi di ciò che ne formava la gloria."¹⁴⁸

He had definitely left behind the narrow provincial patriotism of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and he felt himself to be entirely an Italian. However, there was joined to this a sad conviction that he would not be able to contribute towards making a greater Italy; nor did he have much faith in the attempts of his contemporaries to obtain freedom.

148. "It made us the slave of France--Great God: What disloyal nation who has lost forever every right to the esteem of Europe, will it ever return to exercise its tyrannical power over the most beautiful country of the world? No, Frenchmen. We deserve other destinies. A Nation so noble will never have more disgrace than to be subject. A million soldiers is not surety, But Italy for the crime of France, has already lost a part of her splendor...Italy emits a cry of lamentation when it sees its country despoiled of its former glory. Ibid., p. 313.

The result was that Leopardi was left strangely unmoved by political events of his day. The Revolutions of 1820, '21 and '31 in Naples, Piedmont, and Bologna, the death of Napoleon, the unfortunate Mazzinian movement, and innumerable other occurrences in Europe from 1819 on left him indifferent. This lack of participation definitely sets him aside from his contemporaries and makes his behavior very enigmatic. He had suffered too much under the oppression of domestic, papal, French, and Austrian tyranny not to be very conscious of all that occurred. Vossler explains his lack of participation by "il suo spirito somiglia a un sensibile strumento sismografico, il quale, murato sotto terra, non registra i rumori e le tempeste del giorno, tanto più esattamente le tensioni e le scosse delle profondità,¹⁴⁹ e per cosidire, il terremoto dello spirito di tempi," which is probably as good an answer as any. He lacked the temperament to forget himself, and, since he was engrossed in suffering and pitying, he did not wish to be disturbed. But there could rise in him the man of wrath and rebellion. Then he hated the oppressor, but he hates with Alfieri and Foscolo, with Dante, Petrarch and Machiavelli, with Virginia and with the ancient Greek Simonide, never with the men of

149. "his spirit resembled a sensitive seismograph, which buried under the ground, does not register the noises and the storms of the day, but measures exactly the tremors and the movements of the depths, so to speak, the trembling of the spirit of the times."

C. Vossler, Leopardi, Naples 1926, pp. 104-105.

his time. The Canzoni of 1818-1821 are truly determined by occasions, but they do not have in reality any oates and there is no need for them, because they go far beyond the particulars which caused them. Leopardi sees only too well the insufficiency of force and the slight probability of the nation's succeeding in its attempts at liberation. His works are full of desperation, renunciation, and indifference, which partially results from his own nature and partially from the period. Hope, especially political hope, was at a low ebb during the later part of his life. Italy had attempted to free herself and had failed most ignominiously. The foreign hold seemed stronger than ever, and, for a while, the country less interested in revolutionary ideas.

He had in All'Italia astonished his countrymen, for it represented a new type of patriotism. This was a patriotism caused by the consciousness of all that Italy had been, or known, or suffered. Leopardi embodies the new aspiration of the Italians in the form of the passive protest of martyrdom. In him the beauty and anguish of the suffering country are shown, and, on this account, no less than from the superiority of his literary genius, though no active insurgent, he claims first place in his hapless generation. He, also, deserves first place because he understood how to arouse a real love of country and to convince people that to do and to die for one's country was a great thing. Yet it is hard to see how he accomplished that when he believes him-

self greater than his age, which had nourished itself on empty hopes, delighted in jests, and despised virtue.

Leopardi with his skepticism, with his bitterness, and with his sadness closes yet another period in literature. For now the whole system was looked at differently. It had lost its prestige. Mystery in religion was returning. His Canti marked the transition. The inner life in these poems is highly developed. The thing of importance is the exploration of one's own soul--the life within: Virtue, liberty, love, are the ideals of religion, of politics and of poetry. "Italy till now had been dazzled by a brilliant sphere-- the sphere of nationality and liberty." ¹⁵⁰ Her philosophy had come from without. Leopardi brought the end of "Age of Reason" or rather he showed the path which led away from it. He, in turn, had received his ideas from those who had preceded him and from the force of circumstances. He urges Italy to make a careful self-examination and to discover both the good and bad qualities, and from it will come forth a truly national consciousness.

Yet he, although at least a patriot, was in most of his writings proclaiming patriotism a phantom. Italy had been great--was the gist of his cry. He would like to help her now, but he knew no way. There was nothing he could do and his sorrow, doubt and melancholy grew from this so that at last they became a weeping for all things. People had no real love for their country but merely mistook love

of glory for this. But he was mistaken in his prophecies and Italy was finally evolved from the very elements which he believed would be her ultimate ruin. Even his own writings aided in this regeneration and so, despite any faults which may be found with his negative reasoning, it must be appreciated and understood if one is to appreciate the Risorgimento and the complexities from which it arose.

Alessandro Manzoni (1784-1873) is the personification of the new order even more than Leopardi, for he is more definitely connected with the growth of romanticism and nationalism. So far as the first is considered, his Inni mark the opening of the nineteenth century, just as Foscolo's Odi had marked the close of the eighteenth century. As for the latter, he, more naturally than any of the others, speaks of Italy as a nation and, more than that, he lived to see the Kingdom of Italy proclaimed with Rome as its capital. He had lived through the many revolutions which preceded it, and, although he himself took no active part, he had by less obvious means done his share towards completing the dream. The first excesses of the reaction, which had followed the return of the Legitimists, soon died down and conditions began to return to the normal. And because the men of this period, Manzoni included, did not express themselves in the same manner as the Revolutionary writers, it is not to be assumed that they were less of Liberals, for they were not. They both were children of the eighteenth century, with liberty, country, equality as their program, and the Rights

of Man as their creed. The chief difference was the return of the religious spirit, but this spirit had received the stamp of the new age and was attempting to harmonize the doctrines of Jesus with the new program, by showing that at the bottom they were one and the same thing. Manzoni realized these facts and in his own writing accomplishes the synthesis of them.

His writing falls into very definite periods, the first of which is the poetic one. This announces the new departure by showing the romantic and neo-Guelfism influences which place him above Leopardi as a poet of his age. It also proves his patriotism, for among these are found Il Trionfo della Libertà (1801), which was composed after the Treaty of Luneville. Here the "trilustre vate", infatuated with the revolutionary ideas, represents in a pantasmagoria, partly allegorical and partly historical, - Liberty triumphant over Tyranny and Superstition. He also pours out his passion for liberty and his indignation concerning the corrupt ministers of the Church. He bemoans the fact that they have been a subject nation for so long and urges them to rise to arms:

".....l'armi, l'armi appresta,
sorgi, ed emula in campo i franchi eroi,"¹⁵¹
¹⁵²

for they are "sotto al giogo de la greve stola," as well

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151. "...Arms, bring forth the arms, and emulate in the fields the French heroes."
A Manzoni, Tutte le Opere, "Del Trionfo della Libertà"
Florence, 1928, p. 15.
152. "under the yoke of the heavy stole"
Ibid., p. II.

as under foreign princes. The whole poem shows quite clearly the influence of Monti and is in fact an imitation of him. The ideas contained in it are forcibly and clearly expressed, and they represent that deep-seated love of country which was to be his guiding influence throughout his life. His admiration for Monti is shown by Adda (1802) which he dedicated to him. The originality of expression and thought which are seen in these is not to be found in his three Sermoni (1803-1804) for they are quite Parinian in content, being a commentary on the faults of the age. Another of this group is Urania (1807), which although classical in form and content is valuable for the lessons in virtue and courage that it inculcates. As a matter of fact, in most of this early poetry, he deals purely with subjects which pertain to the ideas of the age and they are introduced into the poems by various and sundry means, for his love of Italy was always foremost in his thoughts.

Before his next poems were written, he went through a period of storm and stress (as much as this was possible for him), which resulted in his conversion to Catholicism. This religious change had a very definite effect on his thinking. Prior to this change, he had been more or less a follower of the doctrines of the Encyclopedists and had been imbued with the French rationalism, and earlier had put off his faith to become a follower of Voltairian deism. Now, he gradually turned back to Catholicism because of the influence of his wife, but more important, because of a certain fundamental need and exigency of his spirit to find a logical

basis for the solution of moral problems. He professed Catholicism with a sincere fervor and practiced it most devoutly for the rest of his life, ever opposing intolerance and agreeing with those that "vogliono assolutamente tener unità la religione ad articoli di fede politica."¹⁵³ This is so true that, in 1872, he accepted the citizenship of Italian Rome, thanking the municipality for the honor which they had paid to his constant adherence during his long life to the principles of independence and unity of the fatherland.

The Inni Sacri (1812-1822) have as an ideal basis the fundamentals of democracy. They really embody the idea of the century, baptized and consecrated under the Christian morality of the equality of men who are all brothers in Christ, the rebuke of the oppressors, and the glorification of the oppressed. It is the trinity of "liberty, fraternity, equality" converted and evangelized. The result of this idea is a simple, serene, and tranquil presentation of an ideal and reconciled world in which the discords and pains of this earth are harmonized and ended.¹⁵⁴ In them, he offers to man a peace which his own distraught world could not bring. He proposed to lead them back again to a religion from which great, noble, and human feelings would naturally come. So he became the poet of the great idealistic movement which, while it reacted against the sensism of the eighteenth cen-

153. "They wished absolutely to hold the religion united to the articles of the political faith."

Rossi, op. cit., III, 296.

154. DeSanctis, op. cit., II, 919-920.

tury, took from that same century, and sanctified by faith, the liberal ideals which had been profaned by the orgy of the Revolution.

In contrast to the Inni, and yet in accord, are his political poems of these same years, and, although he did not take an active and public part, he followed with burning heart the hard course of Italian affairs. In 1814, he wrote his protest against the Senate of the Kingdom of Italy, had begged the powers of Europe that Eugène Beauharnais be elected king. He urged, instead, the convocation of the Assembly, who alone were representatives of the national will. This Canzone manifests the hope that the members could awaken Italy to the value of liberty and independence, Italy, which is

"Terra che l'oro
parta, costretta, allo straniero, e'schiava."¹⁵⁵

His seems a rather ingenious hope when both the political and economic conditions of the country are considered, but that it is even expressed is hopeful. It is of course true that Italy was incapable of governing herself then as she seems to be now. Yet by the very fact that someone had stated that she should be free, would make it more possible for her to become so.

The year after, in the fragmentary remains of another canzone, Il Proclama di Rimini (1815), he applauds the ardent attempt of Murat to save the country from bowing

155. "A land, enslaved, that is forced to bring gold to foreigners."
Manzoni, "Canzone", op. cit., p. 39.

before the power of the Coalition. He has the courage and the foresight to prophesy the salvation of the unity of Italy by the means of monarchy. He hears the cry from the people for liberty, peace, and glory. And in return, he makes this reply:

"liberi non sareu se non siam una;
ai men forti di noi greggio dispetto,
fin che non sorga un uom chi ci raduni."156

He, clearly saw that her weakness lay in her division, even more than in her social weakness. He, also, had well assimilated the idea of a national state from the political trends of his period and was presenting it to his country in poetical form. The first line of the quotation has become one of the most famous and is equal to Dante's "ahi serva Italia." It was to be realized only after many trials and failures.

When, in March 1821, the Piedmont revolution fed the illusions of the liberal Lombards and the constitutional militia appeared ready to cross the Ticino, an ode appeared from his pen carrying a prophecy of that which was to be fulfilled many years later. It was Marzo 1821 and bore a dedication of Theodore Koerner, a German patriot, who had died fighting for his country's independence, and Manzoni makes this statement concerning all patriots: "nome caro a

156. "We can not be free if we are not united; we will be the slaves of those weaker than we until there comes a man who will unite us.

Ibid., Il Proclama di Rimini, p. 40.

tutti i popoli che combattono per difendere o per ricon-
 157
 quistare un patria." The ode is serene in its affirmation
 of the holy right and virile intentions of the Italians, pit-
 eous in its remembrance of the sorrows and sufferings:

"Cara Italia! dovenque il dolente
 grido uscì del tuo lungo servaggio," 158

and bold in its thundering invocation to eternal justice. He
 concludes with these lines:

"Oh giornate del nostra riscatto!
 Oh dolente per sempre colui
 Che da lunge, dal labbro d'altrui,
 Come un uomo straniero, le udrà!
 Che a'suoi figli narrandole un giorno
 Dovrà dir sospirando: 'io non c'era';
 Che la santa vittrice bandiera
 Salutata quel dì non avrà." 159

Here he seemed to foretell the "cinque giornate." As a mat-
 ter of fact, the whole thing becomes a reality in 1848, and,
 for this reason, was made even more popular than it would
 have been otherwise.

The last of this collection of political lyrics is
 the Cinque Maggio (1821), the inspiration for which was the
 death of Napoleon. The message it carries is that God is the

157. "A name dear to all the people, they who fight in order
 to defend or in order to reconquer their fatherland."

Ibid., Marzo, 1821, p.40

158. "Dear Italy! everywhere the suffering calls you out of
 your long servitude."

Ibid., p.42.

159. "Oh day of our redemption, oh sorrow for one who always
 hears it from afar from the lips of others as a foreigner;
 Who is to your sons telling it should say sighing: I
 was not there 'He will not have saluted the holy vic-
 torious flag.'"

Ibid., p.42

sole source of all that occurs on earth. History is the inscrutable will of God, the why of which is not known nor ever will be. Napoleon is presented as the great miracle of God. For what end? For what mission? No one knows. Then Manzoni presents Napoleon as he affected the men of his day by his deeds, actions, and thoughts. It all becomes an immense synthesis in which events and centuries are shown, hurrying on, driven by some great power which can save or not as it chooses.

"Ahi! forse a tanto strazio
Cadde lo spirto anelo,
e disperò; una valida
venne una man dal cielo
e in piu spirabil aere
pietosa il trasportò." 160

The ode is conceived on the grand scale and the ideas it contains are a marvelous expression of the new spirit fostered by the old. It is with perfect justice that it was judged the greatest masterpiece, after Dante and Petrarch, that had appeared in Italian political lyrics. The only criticism that can be made of it is that it is too much of an occasional poem, and later, when the vivid interest in Napoleon began to die, it lost much of its power. Nevertheless, it is constructed on too large a scale ever to lose entirely its value.

These five lyrics give a rather complete outline of Leopardi's political opinions, which are really quite simple

160. "Alas perhaps the panting spirit fell and dispaired from so much torture; a strong hand comes from the heavens and pitifully carries him away to a healthier air."
Ibid., Cinque Maggio, p. 42.

so far as number is concerned, yet most far-reaching if they were achieved. He desires unity of Italy, first and foremost, and with this unity true liberty to develop both self and country. Also, he never forgets God, who is always in the background -- the *deus ex machina*. Thus, Manzoni, hopefully awaits the time when his patria will be one and independent.

Although after this period there are no more writings specifically pertaining to political conditions or achievements, yet he does not discontinue his interest in Italy and Italian affairs. It appears everywhere, sometimes in one form and sometimes in another. His lyrics in the tragedies, the Carmagnola (1820) and the Adelchi (1822) are marvelous for this fire and spirit. That in the Adelchi alone should vindicate Manzoni against the accusation of unpatriotic lukewarmness. It paints the lot of the Italian people of the eighth century, transferred by the fortune of war from a Lombard master to a Frank, who write to oppress them, and there can be nothing more evident than the contemporary application to Italian, Austrian, and Frenchmen. It becomes a plea to all Italians to free themselves from foreign oppression. The description he gives of the people themselves might well be applied to the majority of nineteenth century Italians, for they were pathetic.

"Dai guardi dubbioso, dai pavidì volti
qual raggio di sole da nuvoli folti,
traluce de'padri la fiera virtù:
ne'guardi, ne'volti confuso ed incerto
si mesce e discorda lo spregio sofferta
col misero orgoglio d'un tempo che fu. 161

It is perfectly obvious that he is warning them not to expect to acquire liberty from a foreign race, inasmuch as it is a thing which must be an integral part of a nation and it cannot be taken as a gift, but must rather be slowly acquired through work and learning. The power of its lines and the real patriotism in it are very pointed, when it is realized that about one-third of it was censored. Yet so far as actual reference went, there was nothing to be proven.

Despite the fact that this lyric best shows the nationalistic influences, the whole play should be included, because the elements of nationalism run throughout the action and the drama can easily be considered comparable to an allegory, if anyone wishes to identify the characters. He has, in this historical play, combined all the elements which were then active in Italy. There are the two oppressors and al

161. "In visages pallid, and eyes dim and shrouded,
As blinks the pale sun through a welkin beclouded,
The might of their fathers a moment is seen;
In eye and in countenance doubtfully blending,
The shame of the present seems dumbly contending
With pride in the thought of a past that hath been."
Translated in R. Garnett, Italian Literature, London,
1918. p. 347.
Ibid., Adelchi, p. 309.

that accompanies them. It is a continual expression of his own ideas and beliefs. The latter is partially true of La Carmagnola, from which comes the lyric, both narrative and descriptive, on the occasion of the battle of Maclodio. This time his cry is against the internal wars which he detests. He announces the descent of foreigners and he affirms the universal brotherhood of man:

"Tutti fatti a sembianza d'un Solo,
figli tutti d'un solo Riscatto,
in qual ora, in qual parte del suolo,
trascorriamo quest'aura vital,
siam fratelli; siam stretti ad un patto:
maledetto colui che l'infrange,
che s'innalza sul fiacco che piange
che contrista uno spirito immortal!" 162

But, all in all, the tragedies themselves do not succeed. They are slow and lack the real dramatic force necessary to impress the idea--the idea of the age; as in Adelchi, he thinks and suffers with the miserable herd of whom the chroniclers made no mention, the oppressed people whose deep groan has an echo in the sad and solemn chords of the tragedy.

By the time this was published, Manzoni had nearly completed his poetic career, which had borne the marks of the time so plainly, and he turned next to prose, writing

162. "All made in the likeness of the One, all sons of the one Redemption in whichever hour, in whichever part of the earth we pass this life. We are brothers; we are united in one pact: cursed is he who violates it, for he asserts himself over the weaker, who weeps, who saddens an immortal spirit."
Ibid. Carmagnola, p. 74.

various types and kinds of things which were valuable and important. He was carrying on his defense of romanticism against the attacks of the classicists, and he was writing I Promessi Sposi (1827), which pictures his country's life--its longings, struggles, hope and fears. The whole story is an eloquent appeal to the Italian patriotism, and the Italians themselves say that it hastened the day of their redemption.¹⁶³ It is a little doubtful if it was quite so effective, but certainly it was popular and the perennial statement which breathes from every page is the protest against injustice. It is the great democratic novel, and therefore the great Christian one; for sympathy with the poor and suffering constitutes its very being. It is partially an ethico-religious question and partially the struggle of ideality against reality. In the end, justice prevails and ideality wins. Man who has been bent and humiliated under the weight of unjust force must have faith in the ultimate triumph of justice. "Solo al vinto non toccano i guai torna in gigante dell'empio il gioir."¹⁶⁴ So he preaches always, God's will be done. This attitude perhaps accounts for his own lack of action. There is no real way to discover why he, who was able to write so beautifully for and of his country, was able to do so little actual good for it. There can be no real justification for this lack of action, and all that really

163. Trail, op. cit., p. 291

164. "Only the conquered does not share the woes, and the joys of the impious are turned into tears."
 D'Ancona and Bacci, op. cit., V, 291.

can be said, is that he had and followed to the end of his days the concept of a united Italy. He had shown eagerness for this from the earliest of his poems and it continues as long as there is any need for the thought.

Before his opinions on the Italian language are discussed, it would be well to review his last purely historical and political work, his fragments on La Rivoluzione francese del 1789 e La Rivoluzione italiana del 1859 (1871). This is a very scholarly work and shows the careful research which must have been done in order to write it. It stands in contrast with Foscolo's efforts on the same subject. It, of course, has the advantage of a longer perspective, but more than that, it has the advantage of a man more adapted to make a sane historical estimate. He had intended to compare the Italian revolution with that of the French and show that the former had attained its object without violence and in respect to the laws.¹⁶⁵ However, he only accomplished a part of his object because he died before he even completed the history of the Revolution of '89. In the introduction to this work are found a good many of his ideas on tyranny and on national life in general. He points out that to acquire freedom through the aid of another nation will only result in the unity of servitude. Italy does not need to do that, for she has within herself the vital germ which could with so little care become the Italy of which all dream. This dream is based on the universal principles:

165. Ibid., p. 287.



the liberty of the people and the rights of humanity. The rest of the book deals with the attempts to attain these and the failure to do so because the force went beyond the control of the Revolutionists. The estimation of the situation is fair, and he shows moderate sympathy with the ideas, but not for the way in which they were obtained. He shows the strange contrast in the "Rights of Man" and in the rights which they had. Manzoni, from this standpoint, could be called a Revolutionist. He was always a Liberal, but he had a certain respect for law and order which was based on his deep understanding of the law and order in the universe. Perhaps that is one of the reasons he took so little part in the events of his day.

But this was not all. His heart's desire was the unity of the Italian language, since so much more than anyone knew, hinged upon it. He wrote several letters on the subject as well as two essays. He treated it from all possible angles, but especially from the standpoint of how it would affect the unity of the country itself. In speaking of the language, he goes back to Dante in the Lettera intorno al libro "De Vulgari Eloquentia" di Dante Alighieri (1868) and uses his book to help prove his point that the Tuscan tongue is the only possible one from which to get the national language. But even more important that this letter is his discourse "Dell' Unità della lingua e dei mezzi di diffonderla" (1868), which contains the advice he offered to the Minister of Public Instruction. He gives in this letter the exact means by which the language may spread,

the reason Tuscan should be read and, finally, the value of talking a living language. He, concludes with this statement, in which he tells the minister what will occur if his advice be followed: "Ci corre però prima l'obbligo di tributargli la singolare e ben meritata lode, dell'aver proposta **con** pubblica autorità, e insieme avviata per la vera strada, una questione di tanta importanza; giacchè, dopo l'unità di governo, d'armi e di leggi, l'unità della lingua è quella che serve il più (sic) a rendere stretta sensibile a profitevole l'unità d'una nazione." ¹⁶⁶ So he, in his argument, adds to what is generally considered a purely literary matter the social and national question which makes it then something of interest to all and not just to the few. The reason Italy heretofore has been unable to develop a national tongue was the divided condition of her peninsula. Only the aristocracy had had the means to acquire an education; the rest of the country was mostly entirely illiterate, and communication was very poor. But if the ministry would take it over, it would soon be changed. Italy would leave this state of things, and would, after five centuries of dispute, have once more both unity and peace. He has several other dissertations on this same subject, but they more

166. "There runs then first the obligation of attributing to him the singular and well deserved praise, of having proposed with public authority and together set on its right road a question of so much importance; since after the unity of government, of arms and of laws the unity of language is that which serves the most (sic) to render the unity of a nation compact, sensitive and profitable." Manzoni, op. cit., Dell'unità della lingua e dei mezzi di diffonderla, p. 935.

or less follow this line of reasoning. After all, when he had proven the value of Florentine and had shown how it might be disseminated, he has more or less covered the field. His arguments are good and he draws freely from both history and logical thought. However, that is beside the point, which was to show how the language was valuable to Italy as a nation. It is interesting to note that the first great writer and patriot, Dante, stressed this same point. As a matter of fact the unity of language or rather lack of it has been a problem to a great many of the Italian writers. Alfieri had to start from the beginning and learn what should have been his native tongue. Manzoni himself, although not quite as badly off, had some difficulties in mastering the Tuscan. Cavour, the great statesman, never lost his accent. So it goes, and even today, Fascism is still facing that same problem. But back to Manzoni. He made the first important modern contribution to that question. For even though Parini and Monti had written on it, their discourses were not considered important and were of little real good for this reason. The value of his conclusions will not be forgotten, and, more than what he had to say, his own writing as an example of his theory served to aid the unification.

Manzoni, although not fervidly patriotic except in a few lyrics, really had a deep love for his country. It is true that this is doubted by many, and yet if they would read with an understanding heart they would grasp the full value

of a love which was so much greater and larger than most. It may have been the action was congenitally impossible for him. It cannot be known. But except for this lack, he is a man of his day both in his thinking and in his writing. In time, the unity of Italy becomes more than a rhetorical theme; it is something which has become an actuality. Within his own lifetime, he saw those things which he had written about in his very early poetry come true. He had been conscious of his age and its trends. He reflected very accurately the new feeling which had developed during the nineteenth century, and he became for those who followed, the great teacher both of literature and through literature. His doctrines were accepted and that which he had thought was a movement come to be realized as only a new expression through nationalism and patriotism of that which had always been innate in every heart. In conclusion, it may be said, that he always remained faithful to the noble sentiments which he proclaimed in In morti di C. Imbonati:

"il santo Vero
Mai non tradir: ne proferir mai verbo
Che plauda al vizio, o la virtù derida." 167

He applied this feeling especially to his love of Italy, and he hoped in time that she would truly personify these ideals.

167. "...the Holy Truth do not betray; nor ever profit from the word which applauds vice or derides virtue."
Ibid., In morte di C. Imbonati, p.40.

III.

CONCLUSION

Thus the dawn of nationalism has become full day. The Austrians and Bourbons, who had held the sovereignty in the Peninsula through the latter half of the eighteenth century, were gone never to return. The first great revolutionary period of 1789 to 1815 had played its part both in the forming of national ideals and by awakening through conquest the Italian race to a knowledge of its own degeneracy and failure. It had taught these through republics and later during the Napoleonic period by means of empire. Napoleon did not give her the liberty he had promised; she did not even get unity. Nevertheless, she gained much. She woke from torpor to activity; she lived in the present and was once more swung into the current of European destiny.

Valuable, too, is the period of the Legitimists. For now realization comes only too quickly; the tyranny which had before been accepted as a necessary evil in the scheme of things and combined with this thought was the insult cast by Metternich that Italy was only a "geographic expression." The result was that the ideas which had for so long remained uncrystallized now took actual shape and form in the Carbonari movement, which was the first secret society to make any real

attempt to free Italy. Yet this was still on the borderline, for it was more a matter of form and passwords than any active body. But from the idealist Mazzini comes the real revolutionary organization, La Giovane Italia, which quickly ended the Carbonari. In the man and in his writings, one finds expressed in clear and concise words the thought which was either, merely felt or only partially expressed by these six men. Mazzini dreams of Italy, republican and free, but more than dreams, he makes an actual effort to gain his end by arousing the people to revolt. He played little part in the revolution of 1821, but the one of 1831 was a combination of the revolutions which were sweeping Europe and of his propaganda. His greatest effort was in 1848 and its failure left him an embittered man, who thought that his country had betrayed him. He lived to see the great movement of 1860, but the form it took was so different from his ideal that he could see little or no good in it.

The accomplishment of 1870 represents in one way the end of a struggle begun with the first reformers and philosophers in the preceding century. Italy is now a nation with one ruler at the head. Yet this outward sign of unity was not as strong as it seemed. The country still remained sectional in feeling, thinking, and language. The industrial north looked down upon the agricultural south. The constitutional form was understood by only a few and the result was

a very unstable government. General economic conditions improved slowly. Education began to make its way down through the classes. But it is not until Facism and Mussolini that any great progress is made in these lines. It is only now that the dialects are beginning to disappear and the Tuscan tongue is actually becoming the national language. It is only now that the system of public education is becoming widespread. And these two factors, which play such a large part in the greatness of most nations, have yet to prove their worth in Italy. The last revolution has passed, and the form it has left seems to be good. How long before the next one -- no one can say, for history is always a cycle.

These six men, Parini, Alfieri, Monti, Pascoli, Leopardi, and Manzoni represent the cycle of the great democratic and revolutionary movement which forms the basis of the world today. They represent the thoughts, the ideas, and the dreams which played such a large part in the political achievements, and, as a matter of fact, they each in turn influenced those who came after them. They were living during the dawn and they were not always quite certain from just which direction the light was coming. They felt perhaps (except for Manzoni) more than they actually understood the great change which was taking place. This feeling so affected them that in the majority of their works its influence has been found. They grasped the form of the idea, but seemed partially to miss the substance. They understood the meaning

of revolution, but they had not yet grasped the idea of progress. They realized that high flown oratory was past, but not that their dream had come true. They represented the transition from one form to another and, as such, they were influenced by both sides. Their aspirations for Italy are great, and they themselves aided greatly in the realization of them. In them the great work of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries draws to a close, and new ideas have taken the place of the old. Due to such as these the valor of the struggle has not been forgotten. They played their part and played it well. Italy with Parini was still the home of small duchies and princedoms; Italy at the end of Manzoni's life was a nation, one of the accepted powers of Europe. The dream had become an actuality, but the struggle to obtain it shall never be forgotten.

Hoc labor, hoc opus est.

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